Church of the Apologetic Predator
Pet Corner: *Kitty from Hell!*
Was Michael Fay caned
for our sins?
Calls of the Quarter:
Brother/Sister affair
Letters from Prison
Richie *Serial Killer*

Apology

The National Confessional
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Call, listen, perhaps share.

Apology

FOUNDED 1980

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Cover Photograph:

The photo on the cover is by Bruce Williams of Barking Dog Photo©.

Bruce Williams is a spot freelance photographer—he's glued to his scanner radio day and night, and races to any emergency that sounds worth photographing. He sells what he can to the papers, but he's in competition with the staff photographers, so the odds are stacked against him. He took this shot about ten years ago following up on a police call for an "EDP," an emotionally disturbed person. As best he can recollect, this woman had been hanging her children out a window by their feet when the police were called. Williams was in position in the yard, along with several other news photographers, when the police brought the woman down cursing and screaming, restrained for her own safety in a body bag—the same type used for cadavers.

Williams prefers using "point-and-shoot" cameras so he can concentrate on the moment: "People think they know about photography. They have a studio where everyone sits still and nobody is shooting back. When it comes down in the street, and it's fast moving, and it's a now or never kind of shot, they don't know shit."

More examples of his photography can be seen in "Urban Landscape/Urban Figure," page 32.

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LISTENING POST ✍ *Mr. Apology*

Big things happened this last quarter. The first was a wave of media attention touched off by a lengthy wire service story in the Associated Press by Andrea Hamilton released April 30th. The second was the change-over of the *Apology Line* from tape to computer.

An *Associated Press* wire service story goes everywhere. Of course, not every subscriber will use a given feature story, but now editors all over the world are at least aware of *Apology's* existence. And the tide of incoming calls has been enormous, peaking at three hundred a day, and holding steady at around a hundred for the last two months. I went on-line with the new equipment just before the story broke, so I don't know how much the increased volume was attributable to fascination with button pushing. Since a caller can navigate around in the material, he or she is likely to divide the listening into several shorter sessions. But calls did come in from everywhere in the English-speaking world, from Johannesburg to Adelaide. Next, *CNN* came by and shot a piece here in the bat cave, followed by *WABC-TV*, and *BBC Radio*. These organizations would not include the *Apology* numbers in their pieces, so their coverage did not directly produce calls. I also did some radio interviews, the most enjoyable and lengthy of which was on a show called *Brave New Wave* on the *CBC* network. Finally, I'd like to mention that several talk shows have shown interest, and they are hoping some people who have participated in the *Line* will be willing to appear before camera, disguised if necessary, to talk about their experience, or to apologize to someone in person. If this interests you, leave a message on the *Line*.

Andrea Hamilton, the author of the wire service story, is an editor with AP here in New York. She told me she came to the story because a good friend of hers is a bit of an *Apology* addict, and sagas like CM's have been topics of heated discussion between them. Ms. Hamilton said her friend thinks I play God sometimes. I found that disconcerting, but I neglected to ask why her friend thought this. As the person who created this system and continues to run it, callers may tend to give my opinions too much weight. I do take pride in what I do, and it is expressions of appreciation that keep me going with a project that drains my resources. But I'll have to guard against excessive pride. I must state that I don't have the answers to life's great questions, or to any person's crisis. I want to join with others on the *Line* in the contemplation of the eternal mysteries and the questions that have no simple answers. I can usually come up with an opinion on most subjects, but someone is likely to call in with a better one or at least a refinement on my own. That's the payoff. And those who have listened to my comments on the caning of Michael Fay will know that I'm not above expressing a half-baked or tongue-in-cheek idea in order to provoke some thoughtful reactions. This process advances my thinking, and, I hope, yours too.

In this irreverent and provocative vein, you'll notice that the *Church of the Apologetic Predator*, last seen in the second issue, has resurfaced. The C.A.P. highlights spiritual, religious, metaphysical, or existential dilemmas, stated or implied. Members of the media as well as those with long term investment strategies will want to check out the message titled "Second Coming Jan. `95." A woman, who very much wishes to remain anonymous, says God answers questions through her by shaking her head *yes* or *no* (I'm going to offer her a forum on the *Line* so she can field questions). She says the rebirth of the Messiah will take place in Malaysia next January. Odd, but in a way it makes good geographical sense. It's as far as you can get from the last debacle, and they say the Pacific Rim is going to be the happening place in the next century. Plus, He'll be right there to save the rain forest and preach population control.

Regarding the change to a computer, "the medium is the message", as Marshall McCluhan said; and the *Apology Line* has had three distinct phases corresponding to the medium. It started in October 1980 as a single answering machine that lacked the ability to play back the ever-accumulating material to callers. So it was a bit like shouting for help into a tunnel, hoping some one was listening at the other end. There *was* a promise to play back the tapes to the public at an unspecified time and place, and the first playback took place at the *New Museum* about a year later, but it's unlikely many of the callers heard their recordings. Since there was no way for a caller to get a sense of approval or disapproval for what was said, the statements tended to be more integral and concise: "I did such-and-such; this is the way I feel about it; goodbye." There was no discussion. I have just released a cassette of some of the most intense or bizarre of these soliloquies from the early days, titled *Uncut Gems from Year Zero*.

The second phase started in January 1983 with a change to tape equipment capable of playing back an edited program. The numbered programs started at that time. Then as now, if you recorded a statement, it could be included in the next program, and you might hear recorded responses in the program after that. Speakers could now get criticism, or seek advice, or cultivate a following. Certain "bad guy" personalities drew attention to themselves, like Metro, Mr. D, Hardtimes, and, of course, Richie. Other callers became regular commentators or complainers. This created a relatively stable pseudonymous community where people knew each other intimately but only by voice. A new caller might be somewhat intimidated by the realization there were "insiders", but would be welcomed in by regulars ever-hungry for fresh material.

This eleven year phase takes us to April 1994 and the latest medium: the use of Touch-tones to control the program. Instead of fixed linear programming on an audio tape, each message resides in its own "file" on a hard disk, and with the right hardware and software assisting backstage, it is possible for the caller to step through a massive organized structure of recordings, choosing what to hear and what to pass up. The programming is flexible, and there are features I haven't implemented yet, like private voice mailboxes. As of this writing, I have the audio program organized into eleven subject categories, but more will have to be added. For example, yesterday a woman asked for an addiction forum—a good idea. Most people seem to appreciate the new system, and are especially grateful for the ability to skip recordings they find uninteresting. But not everyone is happy. Some are intimidated by the technology or overwhelmed by the mass of material. Others decry the loss of the fixed thirty minute programs that everyone could share and discuss. There's no doubt that the *Apology* community as it existed has been disrupted by the change-over and by the flood of new callers. The hope is that new special interest communities will form in each category, but if this doesn't happen, the structure can be simplified back to a single string of random statements.

One big problem is that the insertion of new recordings into the program is complicated and time consuming, and must be done subject by subject. I can't complete an entire program change over a two day period as I could with tape. I'm hoping a more efficient software will be available soon. As it is, I've fallen way behind with the *Line* as I've devoted all my recent time to this issue of the *Magazine*. I'm overextended. You can help by making a monetary contribution (payable to *Apology Magazine)*, or by purchases of the *Magazine* and the *Tape,* or by advertising in these pages. Detailed advertising information is available by writing to the *Magazine* or recording a request on the *Line*. ✍

☎ Words and Letters

Mr. D checks in

There's an old saying, and the saying goes like this: "You would never find a twenty dollar bill on the sunny side of the street, you'd have to look in the dark corner." And that's the way this *Line* has been for me for over ten years. By far, probably your most loyal caller, other than a few others. Go back to the days of General Custer and you may recognize my voice. I've left some messages over the years, but I'm once again calling to let you know that I'm still here. Through the most angry and lonely and crazy late night times across the country, this *Line* let's me know that there's a lot more out there. So, here's to you man. OK, Mr. D.

To "Not Gay"

John, have some balls and tell your family, for Christ's sake. They'll deal with it or they won't deal with it, but in the end you will feel a lot better. You'll feel a lot gutsier. You don't sound very gutsy right now. You sound like a big ol' wimp. You're family is going to get over it. My father—I thought my father would never get over it. He got over it.

Margo on "Margo's Dilemma"

Hi Mr. A, it's Margo. I just listened to the tape and heard the comments about my dilemma. I'm not going to tell the wife what I know, and I don't think I ever intended to. I'm sure I didn't. I don't want to get involved in that muck. It's really their mess to straighten out, not mine. I'm real clear on that one. Except it just really feels bad, still, to hear the wife—obviously in some pain about the relationship—and know what I know, and not tell her. It's *tough.*

I guess what I've decided to do is just slowly distance myself from these people, at least in terms of the frequency when I'm sitting around their table with them. When we're sitting down with their family and stuff, it's just real uncomfortable for me. And that's my discomfort and my choice, so I think I'll pull back from that. I don't like it. I just don't like it—having to deal with this guy at work. I mean, he's doin' what he's doin', he's makin' his life, and he'll have to straighten it out, or not.

And the *Apology Line*, when you hear all these people's secrets, and you don't have to deal with them on a day to day basis—that's one thing. But knowing the secret, and having to deal with this couple whom I really consider friends—that one's tougher. Because I then have to look them in the face and know what I know, and know they don't know what I know, and all of that stuff. It's *profoundly* not my business to do anything about it. And I'm not going to write an anonymous letter, or do any of that stuff. But it really hurts. These are people I care about, and it really hurts.

So I think I probably will not be spending much time with them because it just makes me nuts to be the holder of the secret, and watch a lie being enacted in a social circumstance. And to top things off, the guy who's having the affair really presents himself as Mr. Morally Upright, upstanding family kind of guy, devoted, etc., etc., etc., and it's true and not true at the same time. So I will let this little drama play itself out without me being present in it. But, *uughh!* It's just nasty, and I hate it. And that's basically that. So thanks for your comments, and, yeah, Ann Landers, or Dear Abby, or whoever did the M.Y.O.B. bit, is right on the money. OK, bye-bye.

Prisoners say "Thanks"

I'd like to thank you for making your magazine available free of charge to prisoners: It's very pleasant to experience and see evidence of feelings other than contempt and dehumanistic behavior which one in our situation so frequently experiences. *Charles Witsamen A-417845, Columbia Correctional Institution*

Please send a copy, if possible the one with "CM Child Molester"—though I suppose that is unavailable—and who am I, a beggar, to be choosing? *Robert Dormon #351963-246, Desoto Correctional Facility*

Richie *Serial Killer*

Part Five: In a series of calls begun in the second half of 1984 a fellow calling himself Richie established an identity on the Apology Line as a sadistic serial killer of young men. In the last installment Richie demonstrated two very opposite aspects of himself by reciting poetry he had written and by sending in a photograph purportedly of one of his victims newly dead. Richie was taunting us, it seemed, and the callers and I were becoming increasingly angry, frustrated, and distraught. I kept expecting the police to show up to ask me what was going on, but this didn't happen. The photograph was not irrefutably genuine or fake, but the burden of possessing possible physical evidence of a homicide weighed heavily on me. — Mr. Apology

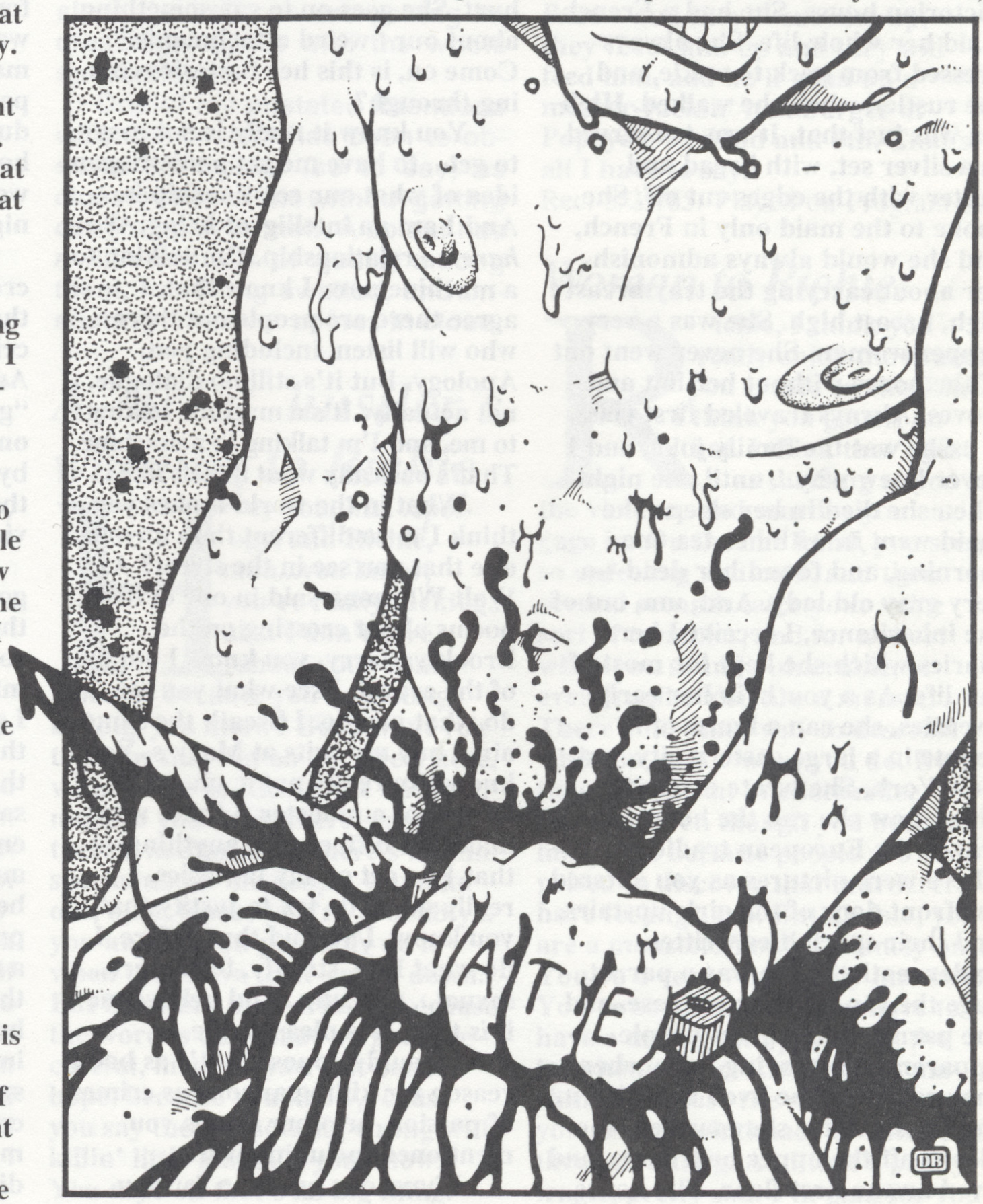
Richie: A touch of class

To the first young lady, my ego and I very much like your analogy to a Hitchcock movie. In a world of great directors, he was one of the very best. Do you know, for instance, he had an abnormal dislike of policemen? You should have no fear that I would want to hurt Mr. Apology. He is after all, just a voice on a tape. I have no real reason to want to do him any harm in particular.

Believe me when I tell you, that I have no illusions. I am aware that he, Apology, has no real concern for me, except clinical, or worse, just morbid curiosity. Apology, and for the sake of the other young lady—I call you Apology because I know no other name to call you—we have said this before, I know that we're similar. Sounds to me that you are trying to justify to your own mind why you do not do what I am doing. You always rattle off the same old prattle about how evil I am and then say you have the same fantasies. Believe me when I tell you that I'm not trying to psych you out. I think you are capable of doing what I do. Maybe you know that and are afraid of that knowledge.

You are right. I do know that what I do is evil. I do have a problem facing it that way sometimes. No one really likes to think of himself as purely evil. Maybe that's why I give you some of my poems, so that somewhere in all that evil you will know that there is also a person. I believe that you know. I do not... I can not think of myself as purely evil. I do not hunt small animals. I don't even fish. Lower animals, to me, do not have any mental ability. Certainly not the same as is given to humans. It is no sport to be able to kill a dumb animal. If you wanted to do that, you could shoot dogs. The human being, at least, gives a good fight mentally and physically. I do, uh, take certain precautions so that I am, maybe, *more* equal. Don't get me wrong, I'm not above killing animals for food, for instance, but, certainly, I could never receive any pleasure as a sport... of killing a... dumber animal.

Contrary to some people on your tape, I really do not want to be caught. I do not send you a picture, or my poems, or drawings without some thought. I do take certain precautions. As you know,



Drawing by D. B. VelVeeda

what I'm sending you would be very difficult, if not impossible to trace to me.

I will be sending you some poems, maybe next week, to your box number, as soon as I get off my butt and copy them. They'll be printed. I won't say them on the tape. It will give you, maybe, a little more insight into me, which is something you seem to want.

I still don't really want to go into my background to a great extent, but if I may tell you about my grandmother on my mother's side.... When I knew her—and she lived a very long life—when I knew her she was a very proper Victorian lady. And this is way past the Victorian times. I'm talking maybe now in the Fifties, Sixties. She invited me over for high tea in her house, a tremendously large Victorian house. She had a French maid her whole life. She always dressed from neck to ankle, and she rustled when she walked. High tea was just that. It was tea served in a silver set, with bread and butter with the edges cut off. She spoke to the maid only in French, and she would always admonish her about carrying the tray breast high, breast high. She was a very proper woman. She never went out of the house without her hat and gloves. Always traveled first class.

She was the family joke, and I never knew why... until one night when she died in her sleep. The maid went in with her tea one morning, and found her dead—a very gray old lady. And, um, out of the inheritance, I received her diaries which she kept for most of her life. As a youth, in her early twenties, she ran a house of ill repute in a large eastern city, not New York. She wrote explicitly about how she ran the house. It was in the European tradition. There were pictures as you entered the front door of the girls upstairs, and their specialties written underneath. There was a parrot cage the ran up the stair case, and the parrot would greet people apparently, by saying hello when they came in. She lived and died in the house. After she married, she closed off the upper bedrooms, and lived on the first floor. The house no longer exists. It was torn down many years ago. I found out why she was the family joke, obviously. [Laughs] A wonderful old lady.

Apology, I will be writing to you.

Rec. 5/9/85. Played on Program 38.

Would you dine with me?

First thing, Apology, there are some poems in the mail to you, so check your box. I've been thinking over some of the comments, and I find myself amazed, *truly amazed*, at the way some of you people think about me. To the first girl, for instance, she said something about my poems showing her that I can be hurt. *What do you think I am?* Of *course* I can be hurt. *Everyone* can be hurt. She goes on to say something about our "weird attachments." Come on, is this her fantasies coming through?

You know it really is not easy to get... to have me get a misshapen idea of what our relationship is. And I am an intelligent being. We *have* no relationship. I'm talking to a machine now. I know that. I agree there are people out there who will listen, including you, Apology. But it's still no dialogue, not actually. It's a machine talking to me, and I'm talking to a machine. That's basically what it feels like.

What in the world makes you think I'm so different than anyone else that you see in the street? As Walt Whitman said in one of his poems about crossing on the Brooklyn ferry, you know I am one of the crowd. I see what you see, I do what you do. I breath the same air, I buy my suits at Macy's. You know I'm really not a, uh.... I'm really not a monster. I think what makes us different, if anything, is that I do act on my fantasies. I really never do try to justify that, you know. I've said that before. I do what I do, strictly, for... pure... sexual... pleasure. And believe me it *is* that. It is pleasurable.

I would suppose that's as bad a reason for killing anyone as crimes of passion, or other things you mentioned including war.

I have one question for you Apology. Would you have dinner with me? Am I real to you? This, of course, does not mean that we will have dinner together. I doubt seriously that could be arranged, but... I'm... *curious* about your reaction to the question.

Rec. 5/19/85. Played on Program 38.

Your dungeon or mine?

I'm tempted to say, "Yeah, sure, let's have dinner. Your dungeon, or mine?" But, uh, I think it's out of the question. For one thing, it's too dangerous all the way around. And, frankly, I would be rather scared to meet you. Because of what I say about you representing a rather evil person to me. When I think of you, I often think of the sort of people who found their vocation when there were job openings in the SS in Germany in the Thirties. The kind of people who tortured and murdered during the day, and maybe came home and had a nice family, and were good to their children at night.

I think you are bright and creative. I like those two poems that you recited—I haven't received your poems in the mail yet. And, uh, the drawings... I didn't "get" them, you might say. But the one you said you did, I thought was by far the only decent drawing in the bunch from a drawing point of view.

But all of this stuff, all these good things about you, the things that make you an interesting conversationalist, maybe the most interesting person, just about, that I get to talk to these days, all those things are overpowered by the fact that you are a murderer. And you said, "What makes you so different? What makes you a monster, and so forth?" And the fact is, it's because you're a murderer. That puts you in a separate category, or a different species entirely. Even though we have these... We others have these murderous thoughts inside us—I know I do—and I'm sure under certain circumstances I could probably murder without much difficulty, but, uh, it's just different. I don't go out and look

for it, and I certainly wouldn't get involved in murdering someone over something as trivial as sexual pleasure. Now I know that sounds like a lot of crap, because there's nothing trivial about sexual pleasure. It's just that all those weird passions are inside of men, and women, too, I suppose. But, uh, you just have to control them. That's all there is to it. And *you* act out your fantasies. I don't know what to say about that except that you're fucking over other people in the biggest possible way.

Rec. 5/19/85. Played on Program 38.

Not enough homework

Your dungeon or mine?" I love your gallows humor. Naturally, dinner between us is impossible. I knew that when I asked you. I admit to being mildly amused that you really *are* scared of me. There's no reason to be. But, uh, for obvious reasons I can't trust you either, so.... As for that poor sweet emotional girl—and yes, your emotion does show—it's sort of like watching a car accident, or something on the side of the street, for instance, like a particularly bloody accident: you don't want to look at it and yet you can't look away. And you can't really do anything about it, can you?

It's a long weekend coming up, Apology. I have four days off, all in a row. Umm, I'm planning something, and, umm, I'll not take up too much tape time this time. You just didn't give me enough homework.

Rec. 5/19/85. Played on Program 38.

"Homework" was a reference to my hopeful comment on Program 36, "Maybe if I give you enough homework, I can keep you out of trouble." [Printed in the Spring issue] Richie was putting me in a bind, and I could only hope that if we sufficiently engaged him he might refrain from more killing. At that moment, his photo of a victim was about to arrive in the mail, and I wasn't sure how strongly I would react to receiving it. Would I feel I had to take it to the police? Nervous about the impending decision, I both praised his poetry and asked for more of it, as well as for some of his drawings; and asked him if he might consider talking to a psychiatrist if I could set up a protected situation. If it came to action, I would prefer that to going to the police. The posters I was putting up stated that Apology "is not associated in any way with any ... police... organization." But they also had this caveat: "Do not identify yourself and call from a pay phone to prevent tracing." Richie was confident about his "precautions" against arrest, even though he surely knew his calls would come to the attention of the police one way or another. I was fully expecting to be contacted by the police at any moment as the result of monitoring or a tip from a caller since the callers were getting increasingly upset with the whole spectacle.

One of my unstated intentions with this project has been to observe the spider (so to say) as closely as possible without getting caught up in its web. A spider has a different set of goals, among them, not being swatted, and ensnaring whatever comes in close.

A street hustler's warning to Richie

Hey you, Mr. Apology, and Richie, man...you know, you're really fucking.. uh... I don't care about your damn Apology because you're getting boring, you know? But I want you to know that out on the street here, we are wise to Richie, the hustlers, man, so you know there's nothin'... there's nothin' cool, there's nothin' special about the people you take out, man, 'cause you're probably... you know... you probably do it when they have their guard down. But be aware motherfucker, 'cause the word is out—that we gotta be careful, man. So you just better hope, because you know, 'cause you say there's nothing wrong with killin' little animals, you know. You say "oh that's no big thing." Well isn't it... you know you check out people on the street, they're hurtin', you know, they're down, their guard's down, man. It's nothin'... much cooler than that.

If you're really hip why don't go take out some fuckin' hustler on Wall Street, why don't you go take out some... a damn cop, man, you so bad? You so cool, huh? Yeah, you play this for fuckin' Richie, man. He thinks he's so cool. I don't... I don't think he's shit, and he better be careful, man. 'Cause you're always gonna meet.... No matter how bad, no matter how careful you are, there's always someone who's gonna take you out. You know, you think you're worried... you're worried about him gettin' caught by the police. He gonna catch up with one of my friends, man—T.C., Chico Down, Paco—and they'll cut him up, they'll cut him up and they will feed him, and he'll wind up a mother-fuckin' hamburger at Popeye's on 42nd and 8th. That's all I have to say.

Rec. 5/29/85. Played on Program 39.

Woman to Richie:

Richie, I think you really enjoy the drama you create on this Line. I think you get off on that. I think that's just as thrilling to you as the violence and murder you engage in. On the one hand, you seem so unfeeling and cold, and then several seconds later your voice sort of trembles, and for a short while you sound vulnerable, or even fragile. You are a monster. There's no other way to describe who you are or what you do. Even though you can intellectualize about it, even though you become indignant because people are surprised to discover that murderers have feelings, too. But, in fact, you are a monster. You're a lonely one. You're a very very lonely monster. You're so lonely that you have to have a dialog with people on the telephone indirectly through machines, because the only other way you can have intimacy or contact is through killing. And that's pretty tragic, pretty sad. I'm glad for you

that this Line is available for you.

I guess what I would recommend is that stop engaging in your sexual exploits for a while, and think seriously about another way to get off because if you do get busted and find yourself incarcerated, you will not be able to kill as easily and therefore you will not have as easy a time of getting off. So perhaps you can be creative and find new ways of achieving orgasm.

Rec. 6/4/85. Played on Program 39.

Mr. A reads Richie's poems on Program 39.

A death pale moon, a death black sky
One lonely cloud, this empty sea,
A shrieking sea gull, these and me.
And a wind which grows cold passing by.
I know that blighting wind.
It blows from starless voids of frozen lands.
From barren rocks of sterile sands.
And empty shores where nothing grows.
What is this wind of mine?
I doubt that I shall ever know.
But I know the places it will blow,
And desolate indeed's the route.
Bereft of hope, betrayed by friends,
I follow it, it follows me, destined so it seems to be,
A wind which blows me toward my end.

Rec. 6/4/85. Played on Program 39.

28 and counting

Apology? I warned about reading too much into the poems. The one about the death bell moan was written when I was wintering over in the South Pole with the Navy. It seemed to fit the time and place, at that time. And I shall send soon to you Steppenwolf II, III, and IV.

I have often said there were others out there doing what I am doing. I believe it. I never said I was cool or bad for what I do. If you listen to this Line long enough, with any regularity, you'd know why I pick street hustlers, drifters, etc., rather than Wall Street hustlers, or cops. Believe me I'm not trying to prove how bad.... It's crossed my mind, I might be killed by one of my intended victims. I once had a very close call. The danger of the hunt is part of the foreplay, of course.

Although I have never been to a psych, I have thought a great deal about it and I think I could explain the motivation for my actions, uh, certainly the conscious motivations. But I have no intention of airing them. Let me say no other sexual pleasure has ever fulfilled me as much as this.

I'm really not sure of the drama I create on this Line, but, yes, I do enjoy being part of the focus. It's not as thrilling as my deeds of course, but nevertheless enjoyable. I think you are wrong about how lonely I am. Again you are reading into things... I do not confuse this for friendship. Young lady, you talk on it almost as much as I do. I don't think you are lonely. I do live alone. I have reached a certain degree of success in my job as a banker. I do belong to several organizations in the city, service clubs, professional organizations. Of course I have friends. Not that I can talk to about this, of course, but, uh.... I will admit to not having any close friends, but that is by choice.

How do get my sexual pleasure? Well, when there's someone here it is certainly not masturbatory. It's just pure and simple rape. The excitement is so intense for me that I often find that I usually ejaculate without touching myself at all. This almost always happens to me at the moment that the victim dies. Also if I am inside the man at that moment, I find that his death throes, the jerking of the body, the muscle contractions are *tremendous*. Believe when I say that I am drained when it is over. I may sleep for, or pass out for twelve hours afterwards. I may have come quite a few times though in a relatively short, or even a relatively long, period, like over a few days. It does completely satisfy me for, uh, for a while.

Just for the record, his name was Mitchell. He was a hustler that I picked up at the Port Authority Bus Terminal last Friday night. He said he was Irish, had reddish brown hair, and a moustache, about five foot ten, twenty-seven years old. He lasted until Tuesday midday. He had a small shamrock tattooed on his left chest. His agony was intense. This makes twenty-eight and counting.

Rec. 6/10/85. Played on Program 40.

A caller haunted by inadvertent murder

I've... I've never told anyone this, except my... my shrink. And, um, listening to this person talk about how much he enjoys killing... I mean, I accidentally killed my ex-sister when I was a very small child, and it's... it's haunted me all of my life, 'cause I didn't really mean it. It... it was... I was... I was just... It was just a game to me, and I was really too young to realize what I was doing. And I, um... I was putting her head inside a, um, plastic garment bag, and putting a rubber band around her neck, just to see her face turn blue. And I guess it was a lot of fun, and I didn't... I didn't mean to... anything bad to happen, but I guess I didn't realize what would happen if... if I did this too long, and, um... and she suffocated. And I... I hid the plastic bag and I... I went out of the house—my parents weren't home. And they never found out. They thought it was crib death, they never found out I did it.

And, um, you know, there's... you know, I... I've never been able to tell them. I think it would hurt them worse than having her... losing her just to find out that I did it. Um, it's... it's disgusting to me to listen to this man talk about how much he enjoys killing, because he... you see, if he really sensed how horrible it is to... take another human being's life without meaning to, I'd... I'd, you know, I'd... it's only... its only been... a brutally painful thing for me, and I... I wish it never happened.

I kind of wish my parents could hear this tape but I guess they never will.

Rec. 6/11/85. Played on Program 41.

Bang bang shoot shoot

One man called to say he recognized Richie's voice and knew him in high school. Another said Richie worked in Citibank, and would tell the police. A third wanted sexual details.

OK. Richie here. I don't... I want you to understand, of course, that I do not know either one of the two people who said they knew me. I did not go to high school in the City. Or in the state. My high school was in another state. I figured you must believe that already, but I don't know either one of those two.

The man who wants to know when I come. It's several times, as I said. Many times. Five, six, to ten times during the course of the couple of days I have someone here. I almost always shoot at the time the guy dies. As to the ones who thinks about strangulation while jerking off, this was a big fad thing in the late Eighteen-hundreds in England: being strangled while you jerked off, or having sex. Not strangled to death, of course. Just strangled. But because of it, many people did accidentally die. I never thought of it as a sexual pleasure, of being strangled myself, so I doubt if I would ever do that.

That's really all I've got to say.
Rec. 7/85. Played on Program 41.

Richie on bowel control at death

As a way of taking a dig at Richie, a caller asked him what happened when a victim lost bowel control at death. Richie replied:

Yeah, uh, Apology? *[Sounds slurred, as if drunk]* I still don't understand all this bullshit about me wanting to be captured, or caught. And the truth is, what do you really know about me? Some superficial items, maybe. But certainly, nothing you can trace. As I said before, the people who had mentioned that they know me, obviously do not. It would be a simple thing for them to prove it if they did. So they obviously don't know me.

To the man who wanted to know how I feel when a victim lets go of his bowels, at the time of death: a couple of things on this point. It usually happens if the death is sudden. If you build up to it, and strangulation is slow, or the drowning is slow, or the cutting is slow, he maintains control... in most of the cases. Um. Sudden death brings about a loss of the bowel movements.

It's happened several times, of course. Uh... it's like vomiting, and some other things that happen at the moment of death. But they are things I can live with. I don't find it particularly, uh.... How should I put it? I don't find it particularly... um.... gross, or, uh.... It's just part of the entire scenario.

I do find that giving enemas... helps? Of course. As a form of torture I can get into as well... so, uh.... Of the ones I've had here, less than half of them have lost control at the time of death. But that's something I can control, uh, to *some* extent... as to how they die.

There's an old saying about death always being quick, but the road to death is sometimes very long. Interesting statement.
Rec. 7/85. Played on Program 42.

When the previous two statements were recorded my wife and I were on a two month maiden voyage on an old cabin cruiser we had purchased and fixed up. Roaming at will along the coastal waters of Long Island and Rhode Island took us geographically and mentally far from the garbage strewn streets of Time Square—although living off speared fish and grabbed lobster was a daily reminder that the top predator laughs last.

Despite what Richie said about my not caring about him, I felt both affection and fascination for him. If he had said it was all a joke, I could have laughed off my hurt and become his friend. But he didn't, and the photo I now possessed and his claim of a new victim sent my feelings south. I had been hoping, just maybe, all the attention we were lavishing on him would give him a new source for esteem and validation, and divert him from predation. This hope was dashed. He had sounded suicidal when started calling, but now he was quite pleased with himself. So maybe our attentiveness and fascination was actually facilitating him as a serial killer.

I returned from the boat trip filled with green and blue visions, but the grayness and stench of the street quickly impinged. I was struck by the large proportion of human forms that appeared ugly and mishappened. Everything that had been recorded in my absence was either by Richie, or about Richie, or at least made some reference to him. I recalled how Richie said he would sweep the streets clean of human refuse, and now he seemed like refuse that buried everything else on the Line. And I saw clearly that if I didn't take some action, the next time Richie claimed a victim I would feel like an accomplice .

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A selection of some of the more interesting statements recorded on the Apology Line (212-255-7714) during the last quarter....

CALLS OF THE QUARTER

Brotherly love

Yeah, I have a confession to my wife, and I'm only doing it through here to, uh, see how it actually sounds in words, before I talk to her, because it's been bugging me for awhile. But, uh, my sister and I have always been very close. Both our parents were killed when we were in junior high school. And, um, we were brought up by our grandparents here in ___, California. And, uh, we're closer than most brothers and sisters are. Anyway, I've been married nine years now. I have a wonderful family, two kids, good job, wonderful house by the beach. You know, nice life I've got going here. But, um, I have a key to my sister's house. Sometimes I go over there just to get away from things, when I know she and her friends aren't around. Just a way to escape.

When I go over there, about six or seven months ago—seven months ago, 'cause it was around Christmas—and uh, I just let myself in like always, and she was asleep on the couch. And she's wearing very sexy underwear, lingerie, the garters, the lace panties, and matching bra, and she had a lot of makeup on. She very rarely wears makeup, a typical beach girl here, but a lot of makeup on her. She had high heel shoes on her. She was just *out*. She was gone. And there a bottle of alcohol right there on the table by her, and a glass, and she had been obviously drinking. The stereo was on. But it stunned me to see her dressed like that. It's just that I'd never pictured my sister in a sexual way like that before. It was just amazing, the difference in her, seeing her in that outfit, it just took me over. Anyway, I shook her, and I got her up and around, and, uh, she was still a little bit out of it, so I took her down to her bedroom, put her in bed, and when I turned to leave, she, uh, she said she needed to talk, that she had some things to tell me, that, uh, maybe I'd want to hear. So, I uh, sat down next to her, you know, not real close, you know, like a brother would, and she was still on her back at the time. She was telling me, about the way she felt about this guy, who she'd known for awhile, and how she thought that he might like her in that kind of outfit. And she went on to tell me a bunch of, uh, detailed things about what she and this guy... or, actually, what she would like to do with this guy.

And, at the very end, she told me that the guy was me. And, uh, needless to say, it floored me. But, uh, she was crying at the time. She just like, let it all out. And, uh, anyway, I don't wanna bore you with a long story here or anything, it's just, uh, we ended up making love. And it was... it was *outrageous*, it was wonderful, it was the most spectacular thing I've ever felt in my life. She did things that other girls, or other women, had done to me before, but, I don't know, the mix of it, her being my sister, or being dressed that way, it was incredible.

Anyway, we've, uh, we've been together almost daily, for, uh, since Christmas, seven months now. And it's getting to the point where, uh, I'm getting real weirded out about it when I'm around my wife, when she and I are together. It's kind of, you know, inside me it's tearing me up. And, um, my wife's job may take her out of the state. And she makes a lot more money than I do, but, uh, I think that I'm gonna tell her, so that she can move on, you know. I could stay here with my sister, 'cause I don't wanna leave her. Uh, *wow*, she's got the greatest ass, it's uh, it's incredible. Anyway, I just needed to get this out. Um, now you people that call up and leave remarks, to people, you know, don't rip on me too much. I'm just a, you know, a man, and I fell prey to myself and my weaknesses. And I've probably done one of the ultimate sins against nature, against myself, but, uh, for the time being, it's the life that I'm gonna continue to live. I guess when it comes down to it, I'm choosing my sister's pussy over my wife's. *Hah!* It's a little weird, but, uh, I'll call back in a few weeks and see what you guys have to say about this. Maybe there's somebody out there in the same kind of predicament, that can give me a little pointer as to how to get my life back on track. Uh, I appreciate the opportunity to, uh, get this out. And, uh, I look forward to hearing some responses. Thanks a lot. Bye.

To Brotherly Love

Hi, um, I just wanted to respond to the guy who, um, was talking about sleeping with his sister, and all of that. I just have to say that I was just floored by that. I have so many different reactions. Um, the first one was that it was one of the sweetest sounding things that I've heard on this line. I mean, you just sound like such a sweet guy. Um, until the very end, when you made this comment about, "It's either my sister's pussy or my wife's." I don't know, is that really how you feel, or is that a denial of, you know, is that all you feel for your sister? I mean, is it just physical? I mean, you talked about her ass, too, and, I don't know, I'm wondering if it's just physical, or if you, you know, really love her. In which case, it's like a pure thing, I mean, it can be both, but if it's just physical and that's all, then, you know, I mean, obviously, that kind of thing eventually wears off. And then, I guess the other reaction I had was that if you, uh, you know, you say

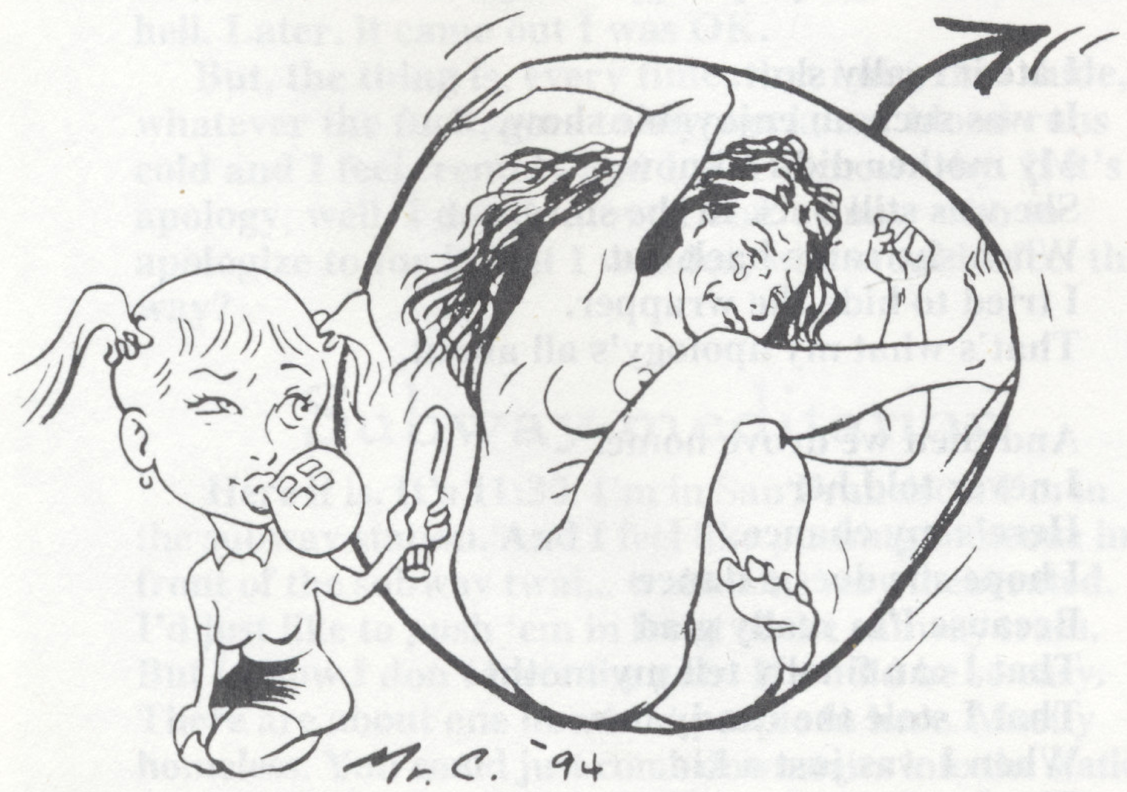
Fortune Cookie of the Quarter:

☺ You may attend a party where strange customs prevail. ☺

that when you saw her for the first time, you were gonna tell your wife, when you saw your sister in that outfit, that was the first time it ever occurred to you. That just didn't really have the ring of truth of the rest of what you said. I mean, on some level you must've even... even if it was unconscious, you must have thought about that before, or it wouldn't have turned you on so much when you saw it. I don't know, I mean, I don't know how a guy reacts to these things, I mean, I'm not a guy. Um, but I guess I would just say before you throw away your marriage, which you might regret, you might want to think about the long term thing. I mean, obviously, she's your sister, but, you know, she's your whole family, too, and, I don't know, it just sounds like a really, really, difficult predicament to be in. I mean if you really love your sister, *go* for it; but if it's just her, her anatomy, um, you know, like.... It *can't* be just her anatomy, she's your *sister*. But, anyway, it sounds like a really sort of complicated thing, and I just hope that for your sake, your wife is really understanding. `Cause, you know, it sounds like something that you couldn't control, and you know, you just sound like a really sensitive person, and, um, I wouldn't judge you at all for how you sound. I might judge you for saying, just reducing it to, like, the physical thing, like the "ass," but I don't know. Anyway, I guess it's just a girl thing, me feeling that way. But anyway, good luck to you. Bye.

Wasting my life in pursuit of men

I'd like to apologize to myself—as a liberated woman who should know better—for spending *way* too much time and effort worrying about men and relationships. And just wasting myself. I'll be thirty years old this year and I don't know what I want to be when I grow up. I don't know what I expect these men to do. I have to stop wasting my life like this.



Drawings by Mr. Cartoonist

Get a dildo

Um, I'm calling in regards to the woman who [giggles] —who is something like thirty years old and she's all depressed because she didn't get married. [giggles] I'm nineteen and I've had sex once in my life—not repeatedly, but just once. And I've never had a boyfriend before.

All I have to say is, if men don't like you the way you are then just *screw* 'em. [giggles] Not literally. I mean find some other hobby or something. Maybe they'll respect you for that, and then they might like you, not because of your whimpering and crying [giggles], but because you're a real person.

Men will *do* anything. I mean anything with a *hole*, they'll do. If there's something you really want, then bite your pride and stop your sobbing and go after it. Until then, maybe you're doing the right thing.

And, um, purchase a dildo. [giggles]

Check back in twelve years

This is for the flippant eighteen [sic] year old who had a response to the thirty year old. Honey, live in this world twelve years and you'll know what she's talking about. A dildo is not what she's talking about. She's talking about self-esteem and trying to regain some self-worth. So, why don't you just check back with us twelve years from now and see if you have all the answers. I doubt that you will.

JK

Hi, my name is JK. Let me see how I can put this. I don't know, it's kind of screwed up 'cause, like, I was hanging outside of a friend's house, and, like, I was, like, going to tap on his window to get him outside, but instead, like, like, like, I couldn't. I couldn't, like, get up on the window and tap, so I was, like, looking around on the ground for something to throw, like, at the window, and, like, all that I had around was, like, huge rocks and, like, bottles and stuff. And this kid, like, I really don't *like*, so I, like, kind of got a, you know, like, a huge, like, brick thing that I found and I threw it. I threw it through the window and it turned out not to be, like, his room. It was his little baby brother's room, who is about, like, a year old. And the thing went through the window and, like, into the crib and it, like—I think it hit the baby 'cause I heard him crying and I ran away and, like, all the lights came on. But, uh, you know, I feel really guilty about this so I want to apologize to the parents of this kid, this little kid out there, if they can hear

To JK: stand up

Yo! Once again it's time to call someone out on the carpet. This time it's JK. Listen guy, *DO THE BRAVE THING*. You know? You've got to think of what that family is going through, not knowing *who* through the brick, not knowing *why* they through the brick. Does someone *hate* them? Does someone want to *kill their child*? Is someone going to *do something again*? You're

not going to do it again. You regret the fact that you did it. You wanted to fuck with someone else's head. OK. It's not admirable, but you didn't want to hurt a child. And totally *fuckin' freak out* this family, man.

I'm urging you to do something you'll be proud of for the rest of your life, and stand up, go to them and tell them what you did. You can't imagine what a *burden* that will be off of their minds. And maybe you'll have to take a lot of *shit* for it, but you'll know that you were a man about it—that's politically incorrect—that you stood up and you weren't cowardly about it.

To JK: write an anonymous letter.

This is to the guy who threw the brick in the window, and in response to the guy who left a response for him. *Don't go confess! Write them a letter—type them a letter*—apologizing for the whole thing. If you confess you're going to get your *ass kicked*. And you will not be proud of yourself. You will think, "What a *fucking tangled web* I've gotten myself mixed up in." Write them a letter for Christ's sake. Say, "I didn't mean to do it. You don't have anything to fear. I'm not going to come back and do this again. Get Plexiglass windows. Love, Whatever." Don't apologize for it in person for Christ's sake. *It's stupid*. They'll *roast your butt!*

Good thinking dude.

This is to the guy that responded to my message to JK. I told him to confess, you said write him a letter. OK, you're right, I give it to you. It's a good idea. Perhaps it would be a braver thing to [confess in person], but perhaps it's a stupider thing to do. I didn't think of what you said—to just write an anonymous letter to ease their mind. That's a fine idea, and I'm glad you thought of it. Maybe the guy should get his ass kicked, but at least this way he lets those people's minds rest. Good *thinking* there, *dude*.

Stole latex gloves from her gynecologist

I have an apology to make. I went to the gynecologist about six weeks ago. I have a lot of anger at this guy for a number of reasons, but that's beside the point. After the exam I was allowed to put my clothes back on when he left the room. And, um.... There were gloves in the examining room. I had a girlfriend at the time and we practiced safe sex. I was, in fact, out of gloves.

I saw them and I thought, "Oh, I should take some." I started grabbing a couple, and then I was hit by regret. I thought, "This is not cool. I shouldn't do this." Instead of putting them back, I thought, "Oh, God, I've contaminated the whole box." So I took about six out and shoved them in my pocket, finished getting dressed, and left.

I realize it was a fairly victimless crime. No one was really hurt. The hospital had to pay for probably six more gloves. Even so, it's not right.

I stole things twice in my life before. Once candy when I was about five, and my mother made me go back and pay for it, and a pair of earrings when I was about twelve, because my mother wouldn't let me get my ears pierced and these were non-pierced clips that I could wear.

Anyway, I don't feel right about it, and I don't feel good about it, because they weren't mine. On the way out I was thinking, "Gosh, what if there was a video camera in the room, and what if a security guard walks up to me and says, "Yeah, you took some gloves," and "Why?" "Well, I practice safe sex with my girlfriend and I really thought it would be a good idea." Anyway, I just wanted to say I'm sorry.

Sung to the tune of The Hokey Pokey

I stuck my hand out.
I took the candy bar.
I put it in my mouth,
And I went back to the car.
I stole a candy bar
When I was just a kid.
That's what my apology's all about.

I ate it really slow.
It was such an enjoyable show.
My mother didn't know;
She was still back in the store.
When she came back out
I tried to hide the wrapper.
That's what my apology's all about.

And then we drove home.
I never told her.
Here's my chance.
I hope she does a dance
Because I'm really glad
That I can finally tell my mother
That I stole the candy bar
When I was just a kid.
That's what my apology's all about.

Lost on the wild side

Hi, see, I worked at this place, and customers call and customers buy things and stuff. And one customer, she was fine, and she hit me up right away, you know. And see, she's from Mexico, and right away she was all, you know, "What's up?", you know, "What's up, what are you doing?", 'cause I'm like, fair skinned, and she was all working it in, and so it turned out that we went on a *date.* And we went out, we had some drinks, and then some more drinks somewhere else, and then we came to my house, and that's all she wrote, right? All *night*, you know? And, woke up and smoke some herb and shit, and then again. And then again, she came to my crib.

And even on Thanksgiving she met my grandparents and shit. And, well, it turns out one day, right, that she went to my *work,* and soon after, the last time I'd seen her, and so I took her stuff out for her, I took her merchandise for her. "Yeah, what's up? OK, well, I'll talk to you another day." She was leaving. And I was back to where I work at. Bunch of dudes were laughing real loud, "Hey, what happening? What's up?" And I was like, "What?" And they were like motioning me, "Come here." And so I went. And they started tell me, "Hey, was it tripped out? That faggot?" and I was like, "What?" And, well, you know, you can imagine what they were saying is that it was a dude dressed like a chick. And the thing was that, that um... "Well, yeah, fuck, he had like a five o'clock shadow, you know, big time". But I really didn't pay no mind to it—fuck, she's ugly, that's it. 'Cause she had a fine body She had a nice body and it was firm, you know, but it was curvy where it should be, you know? But then I remember, and I remember she had to use that lubricant every time we did it. So you can take your conclusions from there. But, yeah, right away after that same day when they told me, I took off from work. Told my boss, "You know, I'm kind of sick." And I *was* sick! I felt my blood run cold and—Oh, fuck—I go, "What if I have AIDS?", you know, right away. 'Cause you know how we're coming out pretty conditioned, so I fucking took off and I got tested that same day. Two weeks later, two weeks of hell. Later, it came out I was OK.

But, the thing is, every time, that lady, that dude, whatever the fuck, goes to my work, my blood runs cold and I feel trembly and I don't know why. If it's apology, well, I don't know, I don't know who to apologize to for it, but I wonder, why would I feel that way?

Subway meditation

Here it is. It's 11:30. I'm in San Francisco. I'm in the subway station. And I feel like pushing someone in front of the subway twai... train. I'm very ineberated. I'd just like to push 'em in front of the subway train. But I know I don't have the guts. It would be so easy. There are about one hundred people in here. Mostly homeless. You could just come downstairs into the station. It would be so cool. Anyway, I'll never do it, but.....

Ashamed of virginity

Hi. I've never called this line before. I just read about it in the newspaper. and I wanted to say something. I have an apology. I don't really know whom it is to. I guess it's partly to myself and to my friends. I'm nineteen years old and I'm not heinously ugly or anything like that. I guess just pretty average. And I've been lying [laughs].This is so embarrassing, it's so stupid, but it's just been really bothering 'cause I feel like I shouldn't lie. I've been lying to my friends for the past years because everyone I'm around is sexually active and I'm not. I'm not at all. I haven't even been kissed before. I mean, I've had no sexual contact and I've basically been making up stories so I don't feel out of place. I mean it's hard enough that I've never had sex, but I think that's more understandable than I've never even kissed anyone. This sounds really stupid, a stupid thing to be bothered about, but I think I'm more just apologizing to myself that I feel I need to lie. And it's really weird. I don't know. I don't know why. I know why I need to lie, but I don't know. It's not that I'm opposed to having sex. And it's not that I'm just this terribly looking thing that nobody would even look at. But, that's my apology, and if anyone wants to make any comments I understand if you're cruel because it is pretty sad. But that's all.

To virgin

This is for the young lady who called about, lying that she was sexually active, when she really wasn't. No big thing, I bet three out of every four guys probably have done that at some point in their lives. Of course they'll lie about it, um, I've done it a few times myself. Wasn't so much a.... I guess I was a bit of a late bloomer, compared to some other people I know. You know, when I was in high school, I used to lie about being sexually active, when I really wasn't. And, although this is not particularly an endorsement of your behavior, later on in college, through some tales I told, I got a reputation as being rather heavily into S/M. Which, amusingly enough, attracted people who really *were*, which... Although, I thought it was kind of fun for a moment, I ended up disappointing some people: not going quite as far in the blood and pain category.

Don takes a big step

My name is Don. I'm calling from Vancouver. I'm doing this in preparation for a "step five" under a twelve step program. Something occurred a few years ago that I have trouble with to this day.

A good friend of mine was in trouble with opiate abuse. He was in my home and he had taken too much. I put him to bed in a manner which was not conducive to survival. He suffocated and passed away. I have not been able to tell anybody about this; although as part of a twelve step program I must do this as step five. An apology to someone passed is not of much value, but to his family it may be. They would know of what I speak. Thank you.

From Lisa to Grandmother

Hi, my name is Lisa. I'm calling from Canada. I read the article in the paper and I think it's really cool. Anyway, I want to apologize for not grieving properly for my grandmother. She died a year ago in May. I miss her a lot, but I never actually, you know, balled or *heaved* and all that, and I think I should have. I still really miss her and I wish she was back, but she's *gone*. So, anyway, I just want to apologize for that. And bye.

Curse heaven for little girls

I have a *problem*. I live across the street from a Catholic school. And every day I see these *girls* with their uniforms on. And that endlessly turns me on. They are high school age. I'm only twenty-one, but the younger ones get to me the most. It's something that I want to apologize for 'cause I feel weird, but there's something about it. I can't help myself.

Looks at crotches

I have a problem. Whenever I feel upset in a group of people, I'll look at a man's crotch. Any man. I don't know why I do this, but I'm already upset and then I do something that makes me more upset—by looking at a crotch. And if there's only women there, then I'll look at the nearest woman's crotch. People don't know what to make out of it! They think, "Well, she must be very oversexed," or she cares about whether the person.... My brother-in-law said I seemed to *care* what sex the person was that I was talking to. And he maintains that it doesn't make any difference, that there's only two kinds of people: considerate people and inconsiderate people.

My brother-in-law has had his crotch looked at by me, too. And, you know, he and my sister are very sorry about that because then they even told their kids and the kids never even saw it happening, but then they have to tell them, I guess for the purpose of warning them against people like me. But they went and told their kids the worse thing I had to live down, which was looking at crotches. I wish they hadn't of told the kids because their kids are going to outlive me. And that's all people will remember me about. *I don't know why I do it.* I've seen men undressed before. I have a husband. I had a first husband and I never thought anything. I just thought it was love-making sort of thing, altogether different from just looking at some stranger's crotch. I don't know why I do that, but I'll find a psychiatrist sometime who will help me with that. But, so far, I can't talk to any of them. It'd have to be a woman psychiatrist, I guess. With my brother-in-law, I've never had a conversation with him, actually, a decent conversation, so he doesn't seem like a real person to me. Maybe I'll call again and tell about something else. But that's what is bothering right now. OK, thank you.

Sacrilege

I don't know if it's me, but personally I find the male anatomy so funny. It's not attractive. It's really funny.

Postman's dream

Sometimes when I'm in a really good mood, I dance on the table naked and then I eat mangoes. And then I go get the mail. Bye.

Left her for a little bar whore

This really isn't an apology. I'm just a fool. For eight-and-a-half years I've been with a man. I've raised his children, I let him use my credit. And, he chose to walk out on me the Friday before Mother's Day. He said, "Oh, I'm going out to get you a Mother's Day gift." The one thing I couldn't give him was another child. So he's got himself a nice little bar whore that he's going to, apparently, impregnate. Everybody tells me to divorce him, and nail him to the wall. I don't know how to shut my feelings off, though. I still love him. I don't know if I want him back, but I don't know, I'm just tired of being screwed, just really tired of it. He even left his kids with me. Gee, thanks a lot, Dear. Oh well, isn't that exciting? So much for that.

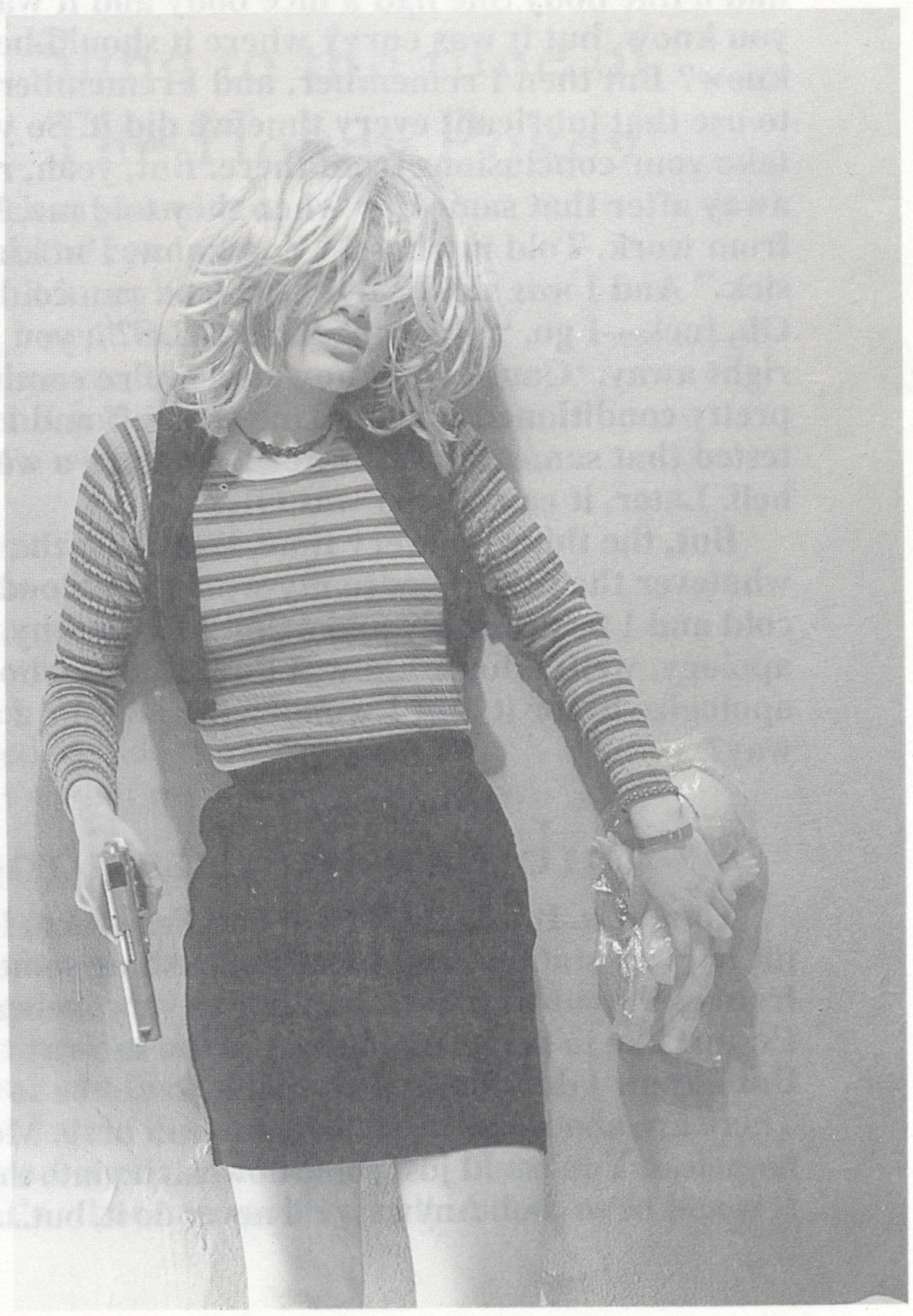


Photo by Bèâthriss

Ladies' Choice

An Associated Press wire story on *Apology,* April 30th, brought in calls from across the US and Canada in unusually high numbers. As usual, the biggest category of apologies was infidelity. But it struck me that almost all of these came from women. I have my theories, but I thought it best to get the opinion of insider Helena Harvilicz, editor, and woman on the front line in the battle of the sexes:

Men cheat. They're animals. They use women indiscriminately to satisfy their physical needs. They don't get emotionally involved. And even if they do, they'll stray anyway because they have little or no control of their sexual urges.

Women get cheated on. They're martyrs. Sex is a spiritual act for them, not a physical one: a gift of love to be carefully bestowed on one man (or at least one at a time). They trust and are betrayed, yet remain ever faithful.

It's an age-old arrangement entered into by both sexes. For men the payoff is obvious: they get to behave irresponsibly. Womankind's dividend is far more esoteric: the deed to the moral high-ground. They get to be better than men.

When a woman is unfaithful, she experiences whatever guilt a man does, and much more. She falls short of an ideal of feminine perfection. As the following calls demonstrate, it's often difficult for "the better half" to come to terms with its "human side." *—HGH*

Something fierce for six years

I just wanted to talk about how I feel—I want to apologize to my ex-boyfriend. I broke up with him over the winter. Or rather he threw me out because he found out that I'd been cheating on him something fierce for six years. And, I realize now that I really—My thinking was, you know, if I cheat on him, he doesn't know, so what he doesn't know won't hurt him, and I'm just doing this because for some reason I need to go astray, and I'll get this out of my system. Like I had all... this whole reasoning that made it OK for me to cheat on him. And then he found out and he was just so devastated. And he's actually forgiven me, but I keep having dreams that he really... like that he *hates* me, that he completely hates me. And so I guess in the back of my mind I feel that he has every reason to hate [crying] and I feel very... I feel terrible about it [crying] and I've apologized to him in person, and I've written him apologies, but I still feel terrible, and I thought if I do this, if I call and tell God knows how many people how sorry I am, maybe I'd feel better. Otherwise, that's it. Thank you.

Cheating cost me, too

Hi. This is for the girl who cheated on her boyfriend. I know what you're going through. When I read about this Line, that's the reason why I wanted to call: I wanted to apologize to my ex-boyfriend. I cheated on him. He cried and I really upset him. I'd say he hates me now.

It's been six years. I started having these feelings lately—feeling really sorry and really bad—because I recently found out that he has been married and he's had a baby. If I had conducted myself properly, I know that we would have been married.

But, you know, everything happens for a reason. Perhaps you weren't meant to be with this guy, perhaps you were. Don't beat yourself up over it. Everybody's human and we do things we regret. Unfortunately, we were the only animals God gave conscience to. So hang in there. I think everything will be OK for you. Bye.

Been the other woman

Hi, I'm getting married soon and I've always discussed this with my boyfriend—the issue of infidelity—and I don't think he will probably ever cheat on me. That's my intuition. But, as much as I've railed against it in my adult life, I have to admit that I have been involved with, I think, three married men in my lifetime. And I was aware of it at the time, and that's something I need to get off of my shoulders. So I'm telling you rather than any one else who would pass judgment against me. That's all, thank you.

Clean kid slips up

I think maybe this is a sign—I'm seventeen years old and I never read the newspaper, but I decided to one day, and I found an article about your line, and I think it's the right time because last night.... I'm clean. I'm a totally clean kid. I'm one of those perfect over-achievers that you hear about, and I decided to let loose, and I got really inebriated you might say. And I cheated on my boyfriend [sobs], and I'm so mad for doing that. I've talked to him a little bit about it, [sobs] but he's gone and nobody knows where he is. I went over to his house and he's not there. And I've gone to all my friend's houses and no one knows where he is. I just want to tell him that I'm sorry and that I care about him. But I thought it might be easier if I got it out to this Apology Line first. So, I guess that's it. Thank you.

[second message]

Hi. I just listened to a message from a woman who cheated on her boyfriend and I had just called before because I cheated on my boyfriend. *Oh, God.* What's wrong with people that we hurt people we love. I look around and I see so much love and then so much hate,

Continued on Page 19

Jason from St. Louis: An object lesson in why it's risky to mix too many facts into a fiction.

Don't irritate Jason, reason 1

Hello. Uh, yeah. Last year my father worked at a prominent newspaper here in St. Louis. Two years I've been trying to get a job there. He can't get me a job there. Tried a couple of times. They're not hiring, but they would always give me a bunch of bullshit before the end result: Found out that my father's days were numbered there, too. It's just been a big headache to me because I'm older and I was looking forward maybe get on a job, you know, get my life together.

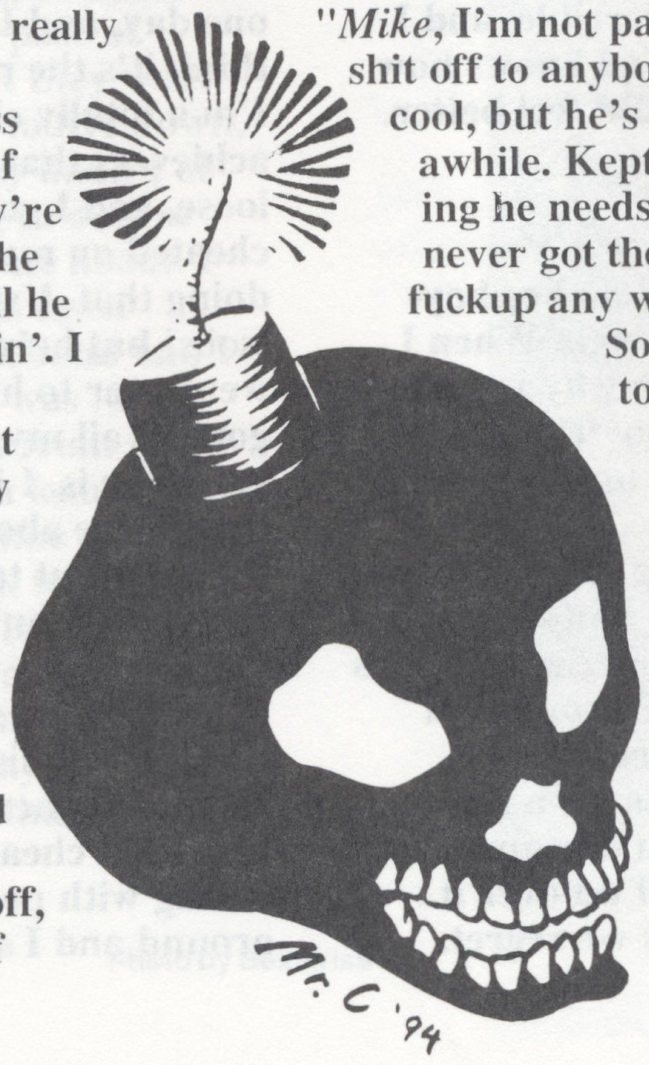
Well, I took things in my own hands, so to say, and I'm very upset it didn't get the publicity it should have—but it would have, if I would have done it right. You could say I had my *Anarchist Cookbook* in hand. Well, in the subbasement of this newspaper there're old tunnels that go under main intersections here in St. Louis. I noticed there was a room with eight or nine propane tanks. I drug a fifty-five-gallon drum that had some old newspapers in it, dumped that out, and broke the seal on one propane tank, put it underneath the fifty-five-gallon drum. I figured that'd give enough time for the propane to get out so I could break the seals on the rest of 'em. I got to 'bout the seventh one and got a little scared, 'cause you could hear it seeping in the air and everything. I shut the door, hopefully something'd ignite it. Thought something would, definitely, but I didn't know for sure. So, on my way out I went back and took some newspapers and shoved underneath the crack of the door and lit the one, lit the corner of it, and shoved it underneath there. And then casually walked out. No one saw me.... So I thought. I don't know how the story really went.

But somehow a security guard, I guess makin' his round, or I don't even know if he was a security guard, that's what they're saying it was, opened the door and saw the fire there, and I don't know what the hell he did to stop the whole thing from happenin'. I figured that, you know, there was a mad rush, or somebody at the fire department knew what to do about it, but apparently it was right under the intersection at Tucker and something. It would've blown up a whole intersection. And it probably would have blown through the tunnel and did some *major* damage. It just kind of pisses me off that it didn't work out that way. Any publicity is good publicity, I'm sure, you know. But there wasn't enough of it. Still kind of pissed off, but —whatever. Kind of want to sign off sayin'—well, you know, you find out—I mean this was my first attempt at some kind of sabotage thing. I think it went pretty well, considering it didn't work! But I'm sure they're scared shitless now. Ah, kind of got my revenge. I kind of feel a little bit better.

I want to say, S. of Cleveland, your address might be a mail drop, but I'm going to do a summer tour and somebody is going to pick up your mail at one point and you better hope—Just be prepared! [4/28/94]

Don't irritate Jason, reason 2

I'm kind of surprised that my Post-Dispatch sabotage attempt even got here since I have no apologies for it. I'd like to hear some responses on it, but I got a new one. Let's see. He was my pal for a while. I grew up with him. He lived up the road. And he started getting into the drug thing, wantin' to be a little drug dealer, which is cool, `cause I could get whatever I wanted for nothing. Started getting into cocaine this year. He'd bring a lot of it around. He got a job roofing, and one of the guys that hired him was a guy from Vietnam or something, so he'd always need cocaine or heroin and stuff, but he never had a car and no way to pick it up, so he'd have this guy, Mike, drive him all over the city here in St. Louis to get whatever he wanted and he'd give him free stuff just to get it for him. Apparently, he asked.... Well, OK, a couple of weekends ago I got a bunch of stuff, got a bunch of cocaine from him and it was cut really bad. I mean you could see the cut in it, like, powder. It was like a powder, and it was just shit. It didn't work at all. And he *still* wanted $70 for it, and I'm saying, "*Mike*, I'm not paying." You couldn't even pass this shit off to anybody, you know. And I thought it was cool, but he's been hounding and hounding me for awhile. Kept on hounding me for the money, saying he needs it to pay his bills and shit. He's never got the point, and he's just a complete fuckup any way, I guess. So I got pissed at him. So this guy needed to go up to Chicago to get—what I heard of the story—an ounce of it or something. It was supposed to be five hours up there and an hour there and five hours back to get it. He called me Wednesday to say he was going, and just sitting back reflecting on it, I realized he's kind of a fucking idiot. So kind of timed it out just right. I think. If he only spent an hour in Chicago, that's means in the hours between 2:00 and 6:00 or so he'd be on his way back. So I



called the Springfield Police Department about halfway from St. Louis to Chicago and told them to be on the look out for a blue Bronco with a younger guy driving and an old beat up looking Vietnam vet in the passenger side, and it'd probably be worth their while to go through the truck. And that was Wednesday. Today is Friday night and this is what's on my answering machine right here from his mom:

> *Jason, this is X, Y's mom, I'm really getting worried about Y. I haven't seen him for a couple days. If you happen to get in touch with him, could you be sure that he gives me a call. I really appreciate it. Thanks a lot. Bye.*

And I also got a phone call like that at my parent's house. So, apparently, something worked. He's too afraid to call home and tell everybody he's in jail. Well, tell me if you think I'm ignorant. It was just something I thought I should have done. I have no apologies for this one either. Maybe it's because I live in a little bitty apartment. I got really nothing to do. It's pretty cool. Tell, me if I'm ignorant. And uh maybe I'll tell you if he's in jail or not. Motherfucker shouldn't have fucked with me. I take everything personal now. Bye, Mr. Apology. [5/6/94]

To St. Louis Jason

To that guy who ratted out that coke dealer, I hope he hears the message and I hope he kills you. And if I were on the jury, I'd acquit him. [5/9/94]

To St. Louis Jason

This is for Jason, that fuck up in St. Louis. Listen guy, you've really got nothing to do with your life. That's really true. Why don't just go to detox and try to salvage what's left of your miserable life. It's not that you're ignorant, it's just that you're *wasting* yourself. And your friends. And I don't see what's so hot about you turning in your best friend when you almost blew up an entire city block.

So, get some help, OK? [5/9/94]

Jason busted

Mr. Apology, uh, this is Jason from St. Louis. Um, I got a problem. One of my messages on there, about the, um, newspaper building gettin' blown up, or whatever, was a story I used in cooperation with somebody else's story, which was their father's story, which was really tight information about a sabotage attempt that happened there, and it was a real hush-hush deal.

Well, apparently some of the news media out here in St. Louis got ahold of it, and they spent , like three days trying to find out who I was, uh, through that other, through my other story on there, through S. and Mike, and all that together. So, I got brought down there, and as believable as that story is, there's only details of this story that match exactly what happened. And, you know, I didn't know that they didn't even have a suspect, or nothin', yet, so I'm the chief suspect of it. So, I don't know, I'm just pleadin' for you to take it off right now, so it doesn't have to be, you know, brought up again, because apparently, it's scaring everybody down at the Post Dispatch, and everything else. So, you know, it was just, you know, I've been hearin' stories on here, and it sounded believable. I thought eveybody'd believe me, but, uh, it was fun while it lasted, but I didn't think I'd get into this much trouble. I'm on call right now, I 'm supposed to.... I took the lie detector test and everything. So, my phone might be even tapped right now, I'm not even sure, but, you know, we're tryin' to get this cleared up, because the guy... they told me the guy that I got the information from is denying he ever said anything to me. So, it's gettin' to be a big deal. If you want to talk to me about it in person, and find out exactly what happened, I thought maybe it'd be worthy of a story in itself. My address is ——. I feel really bad, I mean they said, I mean, it's just, to the tee, I mean, they don't believe me, that I was lyin', so I've got to be a better liar for them to believe me. It's crazy. All right, okay? [10/94]

I immediately took his account of the sabotage off the Apology Line, and replaced it with the above message and a comment from me saying that I had had my doubts about the story in the first place, in part because releasing propane from a number of cannisters and then lighting a newspaper nearby seemed more an act of suicide than sabotage. He called the Line again and asked that I remove the bit about having to be a better liar. I did this. I reached Jason by phone after several attempts [6/12/94]. He confirmed he had been identified by the police from the details he had recorded about the drug bust. The recording came to the attention of the police after a listener directly or indirectly brought it to their attention. [I have not been contacted] He was interrogated for about three hours, given a lie detector test, and released; but he remains on call. He says he "didn't do too well" on the lie detector test, but the police were turning their attention to the father of a friend from whom he says he got the story. Jason accompanied the police on a search of his own residence. They took as possible evidence various literature, including a book of poetry titled *Gasoline* and Ayn Rand's *Fountainhead*, because the plot includes the demolition of a building. He remains worried that they will still try to pin a rap on him.

On June 13th I called the *St. Louis Post Dispatch* to verify that the sabotage attempt did in fact occur. Their crime reporter, Bill Bryant, confirmed it and the police investigation, but said only a single container of propane had been placed in a trash container in a room beneath a loading dock. He said the police had a chief suspect, but he did not say who it was.

The mistake Jason made was to claim credit for a serious crime, and then leave information on his second call that was sufficient to identify him. If the police had not had that information, they may have contacted long distance carriers to look for records on calls from St. Louis to the Apology Line. Again I repeat: If you are confessing serious crime, record from a pay phone to prevent tracing.

Apology Pet Corner

Peanut Butter

Hi, this is an apology for Jason. Up until yesterday I was happy, engaged, making wedding plans. Then.... I don't really know what came over me and I hope anyone who listens doesn't judge me too harshly. I stopped for a few drinks on the way home. I've been reading some, oh, fairly risqué magazines in preparation for my wedding. I didn't want to disappoint Jason. And I stopped for a few drinks on the way home from work and was feeling fairly brave so when I got home I thought I would try something.

When I look back on it, it seems a little bit abnormal perhaps. Bear with me. This is very difficult. Anyway Jason, I really don't know what to say. I don't think there's any way I can get you back now, but... Let me tell my story.

When I got home I went to the kitchen and—honest to God, I don't know what came over me—I took my clothes all off and I'd been reading something in the magazine about being stimulated by—well, somebody else had tried it—and they were stimulated by their pet. *Oh, my GOD!* I can't believe I said it.

They were stunned, of course, and they quickly left the apartment. One of them told Jason about it, and he canceled the engagement and I'm just so despondent. I don't know whether I should kill myself, or move, or—I don't know. Anyway, as I said, this is my apology to Jason. *Oh, my God*. I'm so sorry, Jason.

I was caught, too

I was listening to the apology from the woman who was gonna have her dog perform sex on her. I could understand her distress, because something similar happened to me at one point in my life. I was having sex with a dog and one of my schoolmates was looking through the window, and, uh, later on at school he told everybody, and I kind of had to endure something like that. So, life goes on, and, um, I'm really sorry that that happened to her. But, uh, it's too bad it got interrupted like that. It probably would have been pretty good.

Calls back:

I was the guy that, uh, you know, was caught by his classmates. I was fucking my dog, and they were looking through the window, and, um, the next day at school, it got around school. And, um, I had to kind of endure that. Um, actually, I was making out wih one of my girlfriends, after all ths occurred, and we were just about to make love, and, this was back in high school, as a matter of fact, and she asked me,"Did you really, did you really fuck a dog? I mean, did you really *fuck the dog?"* And yes, I did FUCK THE DOG. I fucked that dog, and I fucked it and fucked it and fucked it. And, what can I say? I did it. And, am I gonna let it hold me back? Naw, I'm not gonna let it hold me back, because it happens all the time, to a lot of people. And, the more I've looked into it, the more I've found out about it. I've seen films on it, and that's... that's quite remarkable. Not only dogs, but horses, pigs, eels. Just about any flotsam and jetsom that a woman can put inside her, that's probably what they have a film about.

Just a (Sub)urban Legend

Uh, usually I listen to your messages, and seldom do I question the truth in them; but the woman with the peanut butter, I think I read that in a book of urban legends. Can't happen, can not happen. So, definitely take that one with a grain of salt and a tongue in cheek.

Demon from Hell

I can imagine what your going to think if you're listening to this, but I didn't do anything to provoke this. The cat just like.... It got attracted by the motion, it got a whiff of the Vaseline.... [laughter] I can't go through with this, because if my roommate hears this, and he listens to the Line, I will never live this down. But in any case, the cat starts licking the Vaseline, and the ramifications are really frightening. I don't know what it says about me, but just the sensation of the cat licking was much more evocative than, oh, you know, than anything I or anyone I've had sexual relations with can do. It's really peculiar. I don't have any particular emotional attachment to the cat, and then I'm really afraid that for a little while after this experience, the cat was sort of, uh, rolling around, and I swear she's a

demon from Hell.

She never really got that close to the heart of the matter, euphemistically speaking, but she got close enough... to arouse me really really intensly, and I came really quickly. The arousal was much more sudden and it seemed just more far reaching. More, I don't know, earth-shattering or whatever, than usual. It wasn't so difficult to um uh expire.... It was just really strange. You've got to think after that that evil is possible. I mean, just to think that that could happen.

Jason from Boston spins another one

Hi, um, this is Jason, from Boston, and I'm the guy who has a fixation upon dogs. And I want to apologize to my little sister, because she was over here the other day, and she saw this stack of *Dog Fancy* magazines that I had. And she, um, was looking through them, and she was like, "Oh, Jason, I didn't know that you were so interested in dogs." And, when she opened the magazines the pages were all stuck together with my cum, like in the center-folds, when they have, like, there was this one centerfold of this Afghan hound, and like, all my cum was squirted all over the pages. And she was like, " Um, Jason, I think you spilled something in this." And I was just really embarrassed, and I know that my erotic desires are not normal, at least not normal to most of society. And I want to apologize to my little sister because I know she probably suspects how perverted I am, and she probably wonders what I was doing with a Rottweiler when I was baby-sitting it, because I think she knew it was cum. And so I'm sorry, little sister. I can't help it. I'm sick. Thank you, Mr. Apology.

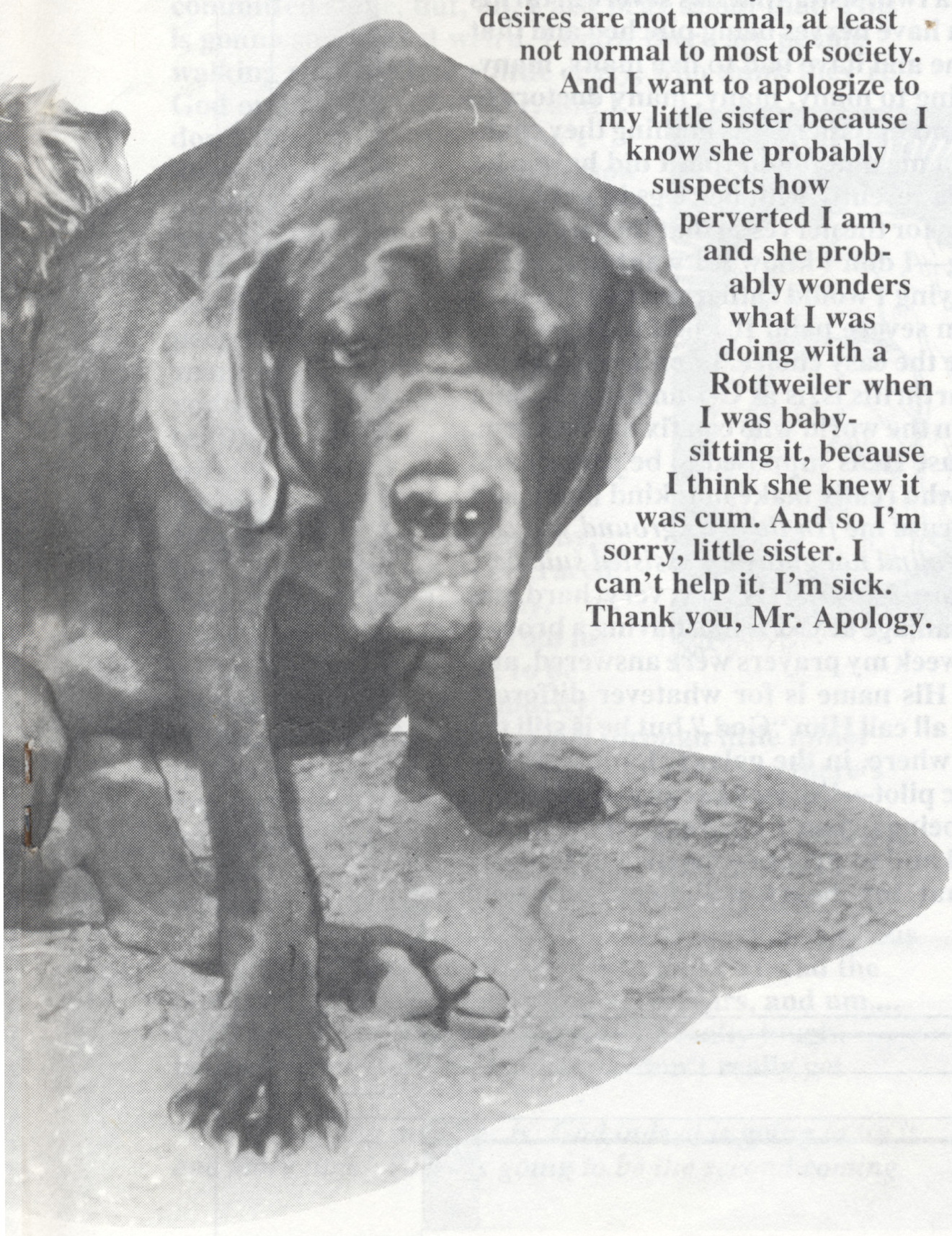


Photo by Mr. Apology

Ladies' Choice, continued from page 15

and I just wonder how can there be such extremes in the world? *How?* It doesn't make any sense to me, you know. I have so much to apologize for. I'm a good person. I know I'm a good person. And the person that I just listened to also said that she realized that everyone had some good in them, no matter how horrible they might seem and I believe that. But even someone who seems as good as me, someone like me—and I'm one of those, you know, perfect little girls that wears white dresses and pink bows in her hair, that kind of thing—but no one knows the real me.

I'm sorry for deceiving people and making them think I'm something I'm not. I'm sorry to my parents for letting them down. I don't know for sure if I've let them down or not, but I haven't been working as hard as I could. I'm sorry to my body. I've abused my body. I've been having eating problems. I've just been stuffing myself full of food, and then getting rid of it again. And I'm sorry for hurting my body. I don't know. I don't even know who else I've hurt. I might have been so screwed up I didn't even realize who I was hurting. Does that make any sense? I don't know if it does. In some ways it doesn't matter. I don't know. The main thing is, just sitting here and talking makes sense. It helps. I called up and I was just trembling and crying. Well, I've stopped and I'm fine. Thank you.

Her tail in two cities

I would like to apologize... to... my boyfriend Harold. We've been together eleven years, and I've been cheating on him for eight months. And I would like to also apologize to Eddie because he doesn't know about Harold. And... I feel really terrible about this... because Harold has been really good to me... but I'm really *crazy* about Eddie... and I don't know what to do. Fortunately... they don't live in the same town... but, I'm really scared of getting caught.... Yes, and um... I've never done anything like this before... and I'm... I'm sorry. ❤

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Our Father of Pain

Hi, my name is Dale and I feel very, very, angry at God, and it upsets me that I'm this angry. I have a twin sister that has severe arthritis of the spine, like *I do*. We both have nerves being pinched and that cause very much pain. I am forty-nine and have had to live many, many, years suffering with my pain and going to many, many, many doctors to only hear that my pain is in my head and that there was nothing they could do. And finally they started testing on me and found that I did have a lot of damage. My sister only had trouble recently with her legs in pain, and was able to have surgery to make room for the nerves so that they wouldn't be pinched. And I have been praying—I don't know if I want to use that word "prayer"—but I have been praying I would rather not be here than to have to live the rest of my years in severe pain. If I had a choice that would be an easy choice, I would take the easy choice. I don't want to die. And the doctors say that where my arthritis is, is at C-1 and they cannot operate. They said there's no doctor in the world who can fix my problem.

And I am very mad at God, because He is supposed to be perfect and he has put so many people on Earth who really make mankind laugh and be perfect. I have to take a drink, excuse me *[In the background you can hear the TV news. "Dr. Kevorkian is found not guilty on assisted suicide", etc. She starts talking again once the story is over.]* It is very, very, hard and scary for me to know that my nerve damage at C-1 is like having a broken neck. When I was in the hospital last week my prayers were answered, and I want to thank God—or whatever His name is for whatever different religions calls Him, because we don't all call Him "God," but he is still the same person for all mankind, every where, in the galaxy. I am trying to keep very calm because my automatic pilot—I'm *mad* because God forgot to put an automatic pilot in human beings. And I am very, very, angry that I had to teach myself to control and to produce my *own* automatic system in my human body so that my heart will keep pumping

and my lungs will keep working. I have gone to many, many, doctors, heart specialists, brain specialists, stomach specialists, all specialists, and there is *no one.* And I don't think that God is very fair to me to not listen to my advice, and to be mad at *me* because I didn't say it the right way....

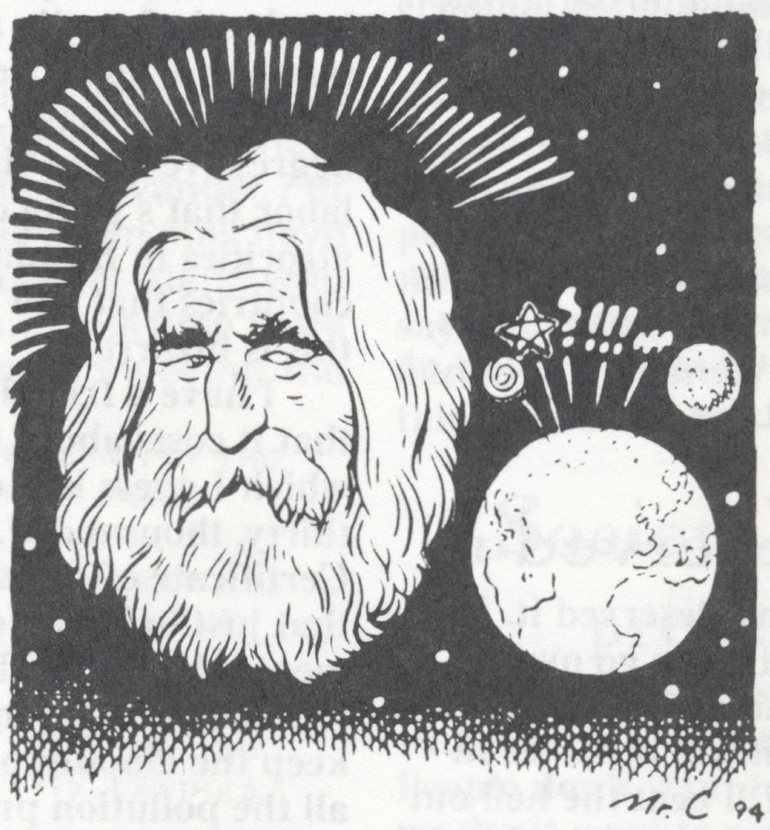
No God

This is Gaston, from Canada. This is a message for the lady that's mad at God. Well, I don't believe that there is a God. I'm a blind person, and uh, if there is a God, why are there so many blind people, and so many wheelchair cases, and mental illness and all... all that stuff. No, I used to believe in God, but uh, where is he? There's no proof there is a God. You may want to think that over, because I don't think there is a God. There's no proof of it. Take care, I wish you well, my dear. Bye now.

Second Coming Jan.`95

I think this is great. I just love this. You just sound like a really neat person. I heard about you on WGN Radio.

Um, I'm not here to confess any sins. I've certainly committed some, but, uh, I just pray about that. This is gonna sound real weird. I know there are people walking who are like a little crazy, who think they're God or Jesus, or whatever, and I don't think that, but.... I don't know if you're a Christian person or not. Or a religious person. And we have the Bible, and we have faith that there is a God. A lot of people have that faith, but a lot of people think this happened 2000 years ago, or 4000 years ago if you're Jewish. And so I'm here to testify that God is indeed still with us, and, for some reason, He has made me a messenger *[nervous laugh],* I don't know why, but.... I do not want to be traced. You can use anything I say. That's fine. I'm calling from my home, but I do not want to be traced. I do not want publicity. Although I think I'm learning, through little minor things that people do not believe any way, so there's not going to be reporters on my lawn, and that's something that I do not want. I do not want publicity. I want my happy little quiet home without those *reporters* sticking their microphones in my face.



Yes, there indeed a *God!* I went through a religious experience like fourteen years ago, and I've had the power of Jesus with me for fourteen years, and um.... Let's see, how do I explain this? It's really tough, because I understand that people don't really get this....

OK! My big message *is: God indeed is going to try it one more time! There is going to be the second coming of Jesus, and it's coming soon!* Now that's something I didn't really believe in. Before this happened fourteen years ago, I had faith because I needed to, I wanted to, and my mom was a good Christian woman, and then I had this rebirth experience. And I literally have felt the power of God *in my body!* I can't expla.... OK, He can move my head around with a force. That I can ask Him yes or no questions, and He can move my head up and down for *yes*, and back and forth for *no*. I mean that sounds really dumb, but it's *true-ooo!* Um...

OK, OK, I thought Second Coming meant we would see Jesus when we die, you know? Like people who have had a near-death experience, and they see the light, and that would be Jesus, and He would be appearing to us as we would think of Him. OK. Jesus is going to be born again, just from a little baby, like he was before, and he's going to be born in January of 1995. Soon. And he's going to be born in the country of Malaysia, and—this is the *kicker*, folks—he's going to be born from a Moslem couple. I know these people. It's real special. It's a real special plan. God is perfect, and Jesus is perfect.

Probably no one will *believe* me, heh heh, because I wouldn't believe it if I wasn't going through it myself. That's understandable. I really understand that. But, uh, yeah.... Jesus is going to walk the Earth again with us *[voice breaking]*, and, um, I don't don't what is going to happen at this time.... I think our Government, and our people.... There's a lot of good people in the United States, but there's a lot people that are just.... This country is really screwed up, and we've got to get our act together big-time. And, we have the Ten Commandments, which are like written in stone—they were supposedly written in stone, yet how many times do you hear people say, "Oh God," or "Jeez," you know? And that's one of the Ten Commandments: *Don't take the Lord's name in vain*. And people just saying that—they can *say* they believe in God and Jesus, and all this stuff, but they *say* that, and God doesn't *like* that folks. If you say "The Lord Jesus," or "The Lord God," you better be talking to Him, not just saying the word.

Well, heh heh, I can't think of much else to say, but hopefully there will be some things going on in the heavens that the scientists won't quite understand. It'll be like, "Hmmm, what's goin' on here?" I'm not sure how he's gonna do it this time, but it's born from a married couple who have been married.... Well, I won't go into details because I want to protect their anonymity. That would screw up their lives, too. We don't *want* big publicity. We just want things to be.... People to believe, and for people to straighten out their act, and act the way God and Jesus want them to. Thanks.

The Caning of Michael Fay

The controversy leading up to the caning of Michael Fay was a remarkable piece of drama. The episode might have passed unnoticed were it not for the success of his parents in capturing the attention of the American media, and the subsequent personal intercession of President Clinton. Instantly, Michael became the whipping boy for our national yearning for cities with safe clean streets free from the predations of punk kids. The tide of opinion in favor of the caning never turned, but it did slacken as Americans learned more about the facts of situation: that caning was a particularly brutal punishment; that Singapore is a dictatorship; and that Michael Fay was coerced into signing a confession and could in fact have been innocent of the charge of vandalizing.

I asked callers to record their opinions of the matter for several related reasons. For one thing, there are many callers to the Line around Fay's age confessing comparable acts against parental, state, and corporate power. I engaged in such activities way past my adolescent years, and the resulting internal turmoil had much to do with my creating the Apology Line. I see the Line as providing the opportunity for young adults to talk about such acts and impulses in the presence of those who have passed beyond this stage and can contribute the wisdom of hindsight. Since I thought most callers had probably done things in their youth at least as bad as spray-painting cars, I was surprised that initially there were no voices of sympathy for Michael Fay on the Line.

The little punk deserved it

Personally, I think the little punk deserved it. I mean, what the hell gives him the right to go over to a foreign country, vandalize them, and expect to get off, by the way our rules work? Screw it. He deserves it. Give me the cane, why don't you? I'll beat the hell out of him.

Also the American government totally bungled it. You don't go telling a foreign government, "This isn't the way we do things here, so you shouldn't do it." I mean, that puts them in a no-win situation. The Singapore government can't back down, because they would lose face. So, what the hell, they're forced to cane the guy now.

Any way, I think we need caning over here. You know, these little shit punks running around, vandalizing, I mean, I've had my car broken into four times. Caught the little punks, let them go with a slap on the wrist. If we had caning, they wouldn't be so interested in causing trouble. These guys in Singapore are so afraid of caning, they're begging for long prison sentences to avoid it. So maybe that's what the little punk youths of America need now. Anyway, that's all I have to say.

We need corporal punishment

Yes, hi, this is Vince. On the subject of the Fay kid, he was livin' in Singapore, he knew what the rules were, and he broke 'em, and he broke'm so *tough SHIT*. He deserved it. If they did that to more people in this country, we wouldn't have the rampant crime that we do. We wouldn't have all these problems. We need corporal punishment. That's all. Thanks.

America should apologize to Singapore

Hi, Mr. A, it's Margo. Um, I want to talk about this kid in Singapore. I just think it's astonishing that there is so much damn fuss about some punk who's vandalizing handfuls of cars. And the President has to write a letter, and the country's up in arms. I mean, why aren't we getting this kind of fuss about atrocities that are committed in other countries, or in this country, for that matter. I mean, proportionately, the amount of media coverage over one spoiled rich punk who goes out bashing cars, because he's gonna get his butt caned, compared to, um, the comparatively very low level of media attention over the atrocities in any number of countries. You know, we're gonna slap Singapore's wrists, and we're not gonna get real aggressive about the kind of slave labor and child labor that's going on in China, or the enormous atrocities in Bosnia-Herzegovina, or any number of countries that you could pile onto the list. I just think this is bizarre.

I have a friend in Singapore who was telling me that it costs about forty thousand Singapore dollars—which I guess is, I don't know, maybe twenty five, thirty, thousand U.S.—to get something called a Certificate of Entitlement for a car. You have to pay that just to have permission to *own* a car. The government tax on cars there, when you buy them, is a hundred and seventy-five percent. They do that to keep the amount of cars on the road down, because of all the pollution problems and congestion problems in Asia. And so, according to my friend, at least, they've got some of the only breathable air in the area. But, can you imagine spending that much to actually have and own a car, and coming out and finding some immigrant punk has trashed it?

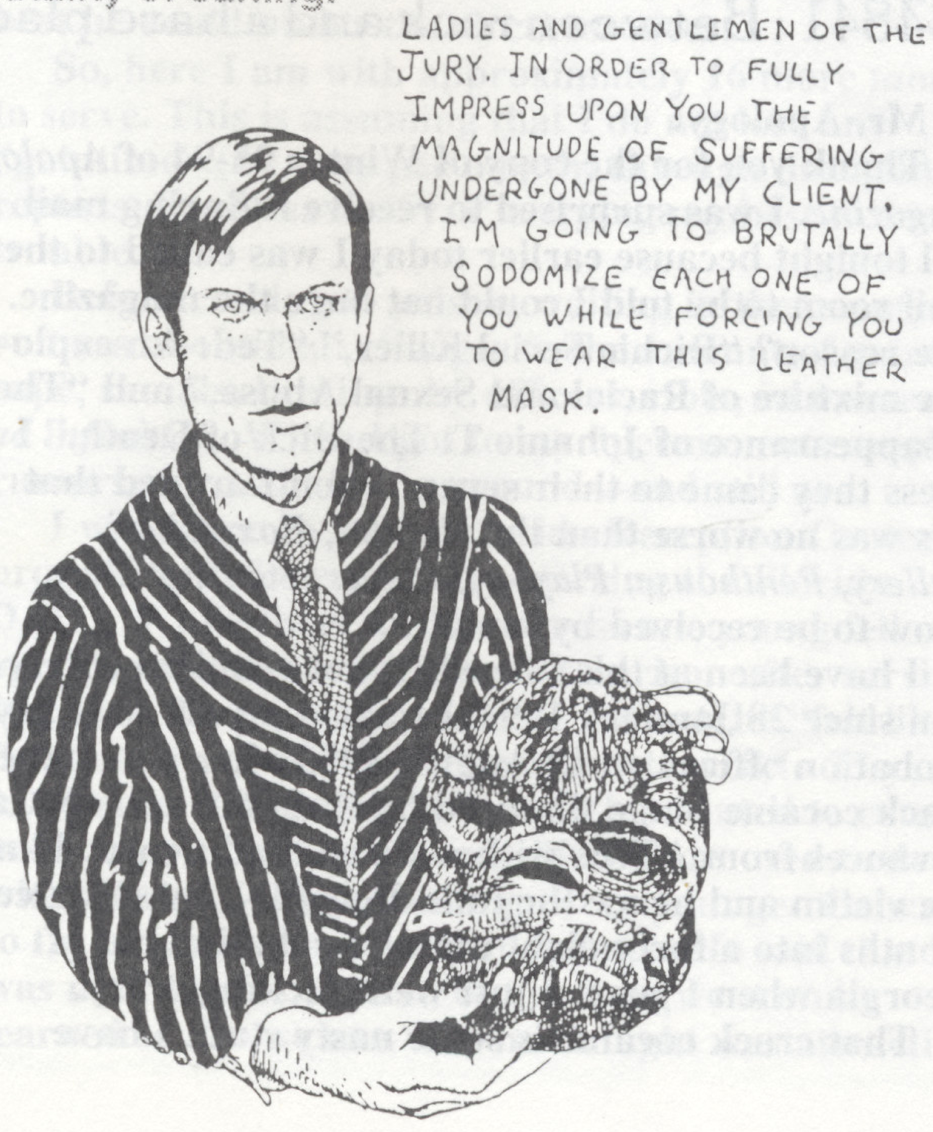
And why are we getting so excited about this, the caning, compared to everything else? I mean, is it because this kid is some kind of sacred American? And we think that sacred Americans should not be treated this way? This is nuts. Cane him? Yeah, that's fine. I don't have a problem with that. Yeah, I've got problems with parents of the kid in a foreign country that are suddenly getting alarmed when their kid goes out and trashes the country. I mean, he's a visitor there. He's a guest there. And it's an embarrassing

thing for America, because, yet again, Americans look like the trashers of the world. You know, going out and not respecting yet another culture. I mean, I think we should be embarrassed and write a letter of apology to Singapore, that, you know, one of our own did this. Yeah, I don't have any problem with him being caned. I may sound harsh, but Jesus, let's get this in perspective. That's all I've got to say.

Mr. Apology says : We should all bend over

Mr. A here. We haven't heard anybody who's had much sympathy, or who doesn't want that Fay boy to get caned. It's pretty interesting. Sure, why not cane him? I was brought up in this permissive USA society, and a lot of times I could have used a swift kick in the ass, or a good slap in the face, that I didn't get. But, uh, probably if I had I wouldn't have ended up starting the Apology Line. So there you go. But, it just occurs to me, sure, we're all "*Rah rah! Whip that boy's ass!*" but if we feel that way, I think every one of us who is saying that ought to drop our trousers and bend over for it. Because I'm sure we've all done something sometime in our life at least as bad as spraying a little spray paint on some rich guy's Mercedes Benz. I mean, come on! If you want him to get whupped, you've got to take your own punishment. Yeah, OK, that's about it.

I also read into the program an article from the *New York Times* (4/16/94) that persuasively argued there was good reason to doubt Fay's guilt as a vandal. For example, the road signs found in his room may have been passed on to him by a more unruly friend who had diplomatic immunity. And around this time there were a number of television pieces conveying the brutality of caning.


LADIES AND GENTLEMEN OF THE JURY. IN ORDER TO FULLY IMPRESS UPON YOU THE MAGNITUDE OF SUFFERING UNDERGONE BY MY CLIENT, I'M GOING TO BRUTALLY SODOMIZE EACH ONE OF YOU WHILE FORCING YOU TO WEAR THIS LEATHER MASK.

Drawing by Fuckin' Crites

Nurse : I found it heart-wrenching

Hello, my response is to the caning of Michael Fay. I just found it very heart-wrenching, in the description of what physically happens to a person who's caned. I'm a nurse, and um, it sounds like the physical response the body can have to this can just be very traumatic, and cause not just physical scars and wounds, but just extreme emotional trouble. And, um, I just think it was really inappropriate. And, um, upsetting to me even more was how American people didn't stand up for him, and recognize the fact that his confession was after being bullied by those police. I'm very disturbed by the whole thing. Thank you. Bye.

I prefer caning to forced rape

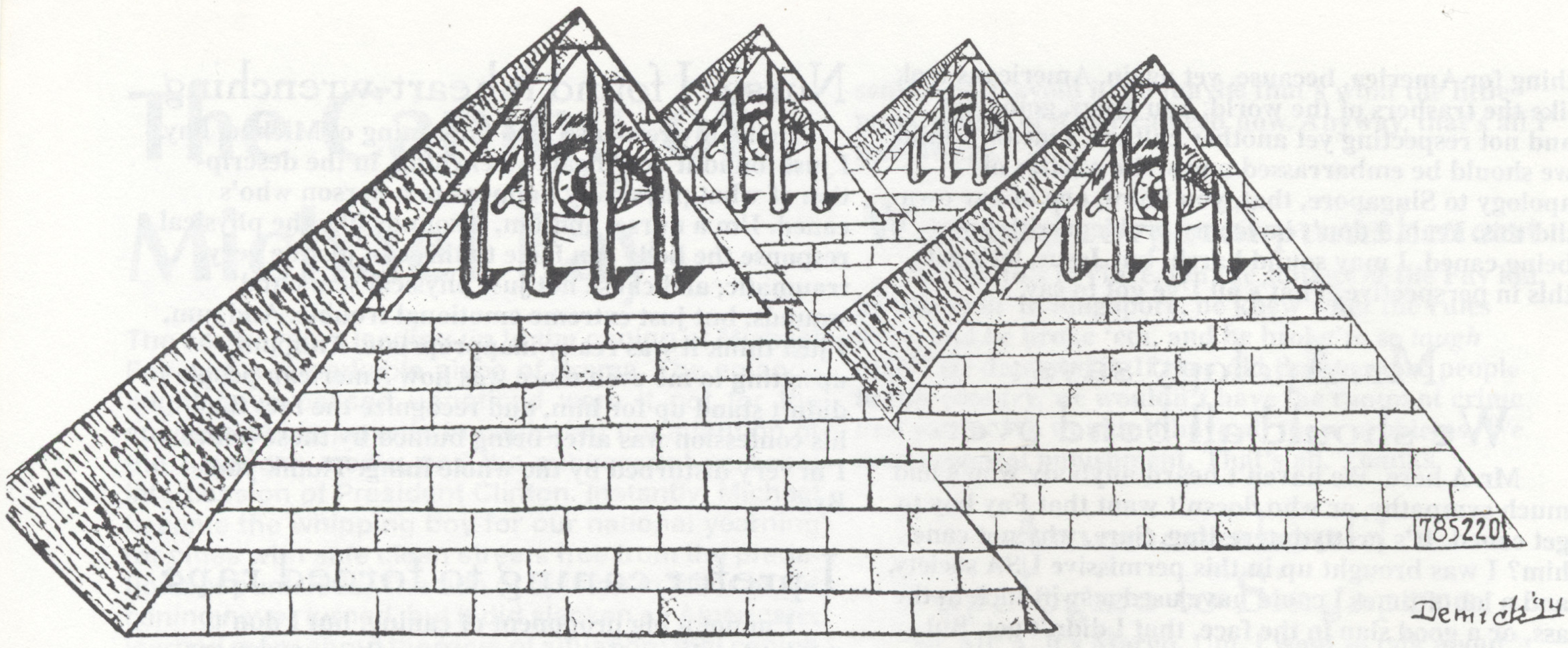
I'm not a big proponent of caning, but I don't think it's inherently any worse than the punishment that we inflict, and maybe it's even in some ways better. I would personally prefer *caning* to being in a maximum security prison or Riker's Island and face *sodomy*, OK? *Forced rape!* That would seem to me to be a far more serious threat. And it has the same problem as far as being a concentrated punishment, because once you've been sodomized, they might let you out, but the damage in many respects has been done. I'm not sure if that it leads to fear among the criminal population. It probably leads to fear among those who might be less able to defend themselves, or maybe even in some respects those less hardened, but it's a real consideration. Jails are dangerous places. I've never been to one, I have to confess. I do know people in the corrections area, probation officers, and they've told me that this is real. And I'm not going to say something like, "Well, jeez, our system is just as bad as Singapore's," but it does bear something to think about.

Society's main role is to protect, not punish

This is about caning. I think the main problem with society is that there are so many stupid people. People don't want to admit that. As far as caning goes, we don't want to reduce society to inflicting physical harm on individuals. And the simplistic way of looking at things is that we're going to go out and catch the bad guys and punish them. Well, society's main role, and the police's main role is to *protect* civilians, protect the innocent. And that could be people accused of a crime: they're innocent. People on the street, they're innocent. And if we want to prosecute someone, we find out if they are guilty. And a society that is capable of *physically abusing* someone is more likely to coerce a confession out of someone. And I think there's a very good chance that that kid was slapped around a lot to get a confession out.

There are cases where some guy has been accused of a crime, they don't have that much evidence, except

Continued on Page 26



Prison Blues: Letters from Numbers

The incarcerated population of the United States is fast approaching a million and the popular sentiment is "Lock them up, and throw away the key." With this flood of prosecutions, the cost of jury trials for all is far beyond what society is willing to spend in cost and inconvenience; and, in any case, a full blown defense is out of the reach of the vast majority of defendants. The "trial by a jury of our peers" we were taught about in civics class is a national myth—at least for most of us— and the plea bargain is the reality of criminal justice. Should a bad act, risky behavior, or an accident of fate put you in the hot seat, your choice will be either a plea bargain for a shorter sentence, or a long punitive sentence if you demand a jury trial and lose. So in contemplating those in prison, it is with rising anxiety that one recalls the verity: "There but for fortune go I."

Apology Magazine is being sent in limited numbers free of charge to prisoners who request it. A letter requesting writings accompanies the magazine. Writings like these will throw some light on our prison system. A few of us on the outside will run afoul of the law and find ourselves on the inside. Best to know what to expect.

933438: Ten years for armed robbery

My name is Jeff, and I'm twenty years old. I was sentenced to ten years in the department of correction in July of '93 for armed robbery with a lot of bodily injury. I don't consider myself a career criminal—just a everyday Class A fuck up.

My views on punishment is, I don't feel they give the people who deserve it enough time. Rehabilitation is a joke, if anything you become a more hardened criminal.

My description of life in prison is, it's a for real fucked up place. While being in prison, I've seen a lot of gang violence, stabbings, rapes, and even deaths.

Yes, being in prison has changed the way I view the world. I've learned that you don't trust anybody, and everybody given the chance will stab you in the back.

Sincerely,
Jeffry Andrews

p.s. I want to apologize for all the crummy things I've done in my life. And most of all, Mom, I'm sorry. (5/7/94)

944841: Between rock and a hard place

Mr. Apology:

Thank you for the copy of Winter 93-94 of *Apology Magazine*. I was surprised to receive it during mail call tonight because earlier today I was called to the mail room to be told I could not have the magazine. The reason? "Richie Serial Killer," "Ted: An explosive mixture of Racial and Sexual Abuse," and "The Disappearance of Johnnie T. The Dick of Death." I guess they came to their senses when I argued that this was no worse than the *Hustler, Fox, Cheri, Gallery, Penthouse, Playboy, Player*, etc. that they allow to be received by inmates.

I have been at this fine edifice of criminal correction since 28 January 1994. I turned myself in to my probation officer on 13 August 1993 after a one week crack cocaine binge financed by five $600 MasterCard advances from ATMs with a stolen credit card. I knew the victim and hence the four digit PIN. I was sixteen months into a forty-eight month probation out of Georgia when I guess I just went fucking crazy.

That crack cocaine is some nasty stuff. I have

snorted powder, and when there was no more I did not have an all consuming desire to go get more. But not so with crack. I got rid of everything I owned just to get more rock. When I had nothing left, I stole the credit card. In one week I was flat broke.

When I think back on that four month period of smoking crack, I get really depressed. The victim trusted me, and I betrayed her big time. But I know it wasn't the real me that committed the crime. Don't get me wrong—I do accept responsibility—but I would have to claim temporary insanity because you lose all reasoning with that shit.

I hope I can stay away from crack when I get out. But I would be a fool to say I'm through with it. I need to find a low- or no-cost outpatient program to help me. It seems they are few and far between here in Florida.

Thanks for a great concept, Mr. Apology, as I await the Spring 1994 edition to arrive. (3/28/94)

Sincerely,
Dann Cottrell

Institutionalized : A personal perspective by James R. Demick #785220.

Since I am new to institutional life, my incarceration within the Florida Department of Corrections (D.O.C.) has been a real eye-opener. First of all, I was railroaded: forced to plead out to a crime I did not commit, but would be found guilty of anyway if I took it to a jury trial. This is what my public defender told me. If I went to trial I'd be found guilty and sentenced to at least nine years (approximately six years actual time); as opposed to pleading out and having to serve less than three actual years. My P.D. told me, "Plead out, do your time and get on with your life." I believe he was convinced of my innocence and was doing the best he could under the circumstances.

So, here I am with approximately 16 more months to serve. This is assuming that I do not lose any "gaintime" (20 days per month) through disciplinary reports. Needless to say, I'm trying my best to avoid trouble.

Before coming to prison, waiting in the county jail, rumors abounded: changes to the amount of gaintime, rape, shanks, beatings by officers, riots, *ad nauseam*, *ad infinitum*. When I got to my "permanent camp" rumors were still flying around—and still are.

I was taken to South Florida Reception Center for processing before officially entering the Florida D.O.C. While there I came across one young fellow, age 26, who was coming back to prison after serving 10 years. He said that when he got out, he "felt like a fish out of water." Now he was sentenced to 25 years, 15 of them mandatory. I believe he wanted to come back to prison. It is the only life he was used to dealing with. He began approaching every younger Caucasian to try to arrange a sexual encounter. He said that he was not like this at first, but as time went on he learned to choose one who he thought was attractive and then force them to become "his boy." Another time I heard him say, "*I just love violence!*" (What a creep). Meeting this person was a very unnerving initiation to prison life. I heard later that he had been stabbed by one young guy who wasn't agreeable with his advances. A helicopter was flown in to take him to the hospital. If he survived or not, I never heard.

"Recidivism" is a tragic situation that has become synonymous with "corrections." This is the syndrome of coming back to prison after getting out. Often the system is conducive to causing a person to return to prison. Probation is easily violated and many come back on technical violations such as failure to report or failure to notify the probation officer prior to changing residence. I met one inmate who told me he was violated when Hurricane Andrew came through Miami and displaced him. Others come back because they want to, either consciously or subconsciously.

The education level of prison inmates ranges from those who are illiterate to those with Ph.D.s, but the majority of inmates are on the elementary school level. Despite this, there are very few educational programs available. The only chance is to be transferred to one of the few prisons that offer classes. Pell Grants are unavailable in Florida for the incarcerated student. This makes correspondence courses out of reach unless an inmate can pay. D.O.C. is phasing out education for the most part. "Warehousing" is their primary concern. Recidivism is good for the D.O.C.: It keeps their employees working and the money rolling in.

Stores, known as canteens, earn large profits for D.O.C. Inmates who can afford to, eat from the canteen to avoid the bland and starchy food served in the chow hall. Very small portions are served, not enough for most grown men. One main course is soy bean mush covered with flour and fried in oil that is used several times over. This is given the glamorous name of "chicken fried steak," "veal patty," or "pork chopette," depending on what day it is served. It is almost a necessity to supplement your diet with canteen snacks in order to avoid hunger pangs in the evening. Canteen lines are very long and it takes hours to buy anything, unless you pay for a spot in line from the many inmates that sell spots. There are a few overly-aggressive inmates who force themselves in line and then turn around and sell the spot. If anyone protests they are willing to fight. Reporting this to an officer would be snitching which is strictly taboo. Being labeled a snitch can cause one a lot of hassle or even physical harm. A snitch may have to "check in" to protective custody to avoid problems.

Every kind of person is found in the prison system. There are people afflicted with various diseases, including infectious diseases; and various handicaps, such as blindness, missing limbs, or other physical impairments. Such people can be seen walking around on canes or confined to wheelchairs. Many suffer from mental illnesses. The only treatment they receive is psychotropic drugs that cause them to wander around in a semi-lucid state. Any inmate may find himself sleeping next to someone who suffers from violent

outbursts!

This institution is still in the construction phase. When I first arrived here there were about 250 inmates. Now there are approximately 1,000. The two original buildings consist of four pods with 26 two-man cells in each pod. The floors are cement and the ceilings are very high. They have an industrial look, similar to a factory. The staircase leading to the second floor is cast iron. Everything echoes.

An officer station is centrally located in the building with a clear view of each of the four pods. The benefit of being housed this way is the semi-privacy. Each two-man cell is equipped with a toilet and a sink. The shower is in a room by itself, so that you can close the door and be alone.

There are many problems with this kind of living arrangement. You could end up sharing your small cell room with an inmate that you are not compatible with. Cleaning of these cells must be done by the inmates who live in them. If the cell is not clean it can result in loss of gaintime when the Dorm Officer makes his inspection. I have had to take on this responsibility myself to ensure my gaintime and avoid fighting and arguing with my cellmate who would rather fight than clean.

The doors to these cells lock when closed and must be opened by a Corrections Officer (C.O.) in the officer station, who pushes a button that pops your door open. You must stand by your cell door and wave your hand to get the C.O.'s attention. If another inmate wants to gain entry to your cell, he can do the same thing: The C.O. rarely knows which inmate belongs to which cell. Once the inmate has gained entry to your cell, he is hidden from view and he can then break into your locker for canteen items or close the door, locking it, and proceed to cause you harm, knowing that you are trapped.

The other type of dormitory here, where I am currently housed, is known as an open bay dorm. These buildings have two sides with sixty-six small beds known as "racks" in an open area. The floors are linoleum tiled and the ceilings are of standard height. There is no echo here and it is a little less jail-like than the pod dorms.

In these dorms you live in close quarters with many people. Every time you open your locker to get a bag of chips, coffee, or whatever, everyone can see; and often those who are without will be drawn like vultures. In some institutions they say you cannot easily bring your canteen items to your dorm without having your bag snatched from you unless you are of large physical stature or have a "war daddy" (paid protector).

There is one big problem that you would never anticipate prior to experiencing prison life, and that is the terrible stench of human flatulence permeating the dorm. Pee-U!

Of course, prison is not supposed to be an enjoyable experience. I find it a living hell. I've never seen the tragedy of the human experience more evident than from inside these razor-wired fences. I survive by keeping busy: Reading, writing and drawing help me to cope with the reality of institutional living. I recently discovered the world of 'zines and I spend a lot of my free time writing letters. I also seek pen pals and will gladly write anyone who writes to me. Everyday I look forward to mail call.

Surviving here means learning good self control: suppressing anger and not letting anyone "push your buttons." This is the strategy necessary to deal with prison staff and your fellow inmates. I have learned that successful institutional living means making constant compromises.

This madness will be over for me next year. For those who must serve many years, I cannot imagine the mental torture that they must endure, looking down the tunnel and not seeing any light at the end, or any end at all. (4/5/94)

You can write James R. Demick #785220 (CA-31), or Dann Cotrell #944841 (CA-42), in care of Columbia Correctional Institution; Rt. 7, Box 376, Lake City, FL 32055-8767.

You can write to Jeff Andrews #933438 at P. Dorm, I.Y.C., 727 Moon Rd., Plainfield, IN 46168.

There are names and addresses of other prisoners on page 35. Consider writing to them, and if you do, ask how to send spare or used books to them or to their libraries

Caning continued from Page 23

that often they had fingerprint evidence or DNA evidence. And the way that happened was the cops faked the evidence. He says, "Hey man, I don't want to let this punk free. I have a gut feeling he's guilty, so I'm gonna put..." And there are cases like that, but people just want to think on one level. It's more complicated to think, "I want to protect innocent people." And people accused of crimes may be innocent, and people *convicted* of crimes may be innocent. That's too complicated. "I just want to punish." It's a simpler mind that thinks, "I want to pick up a stick, and hit someone."

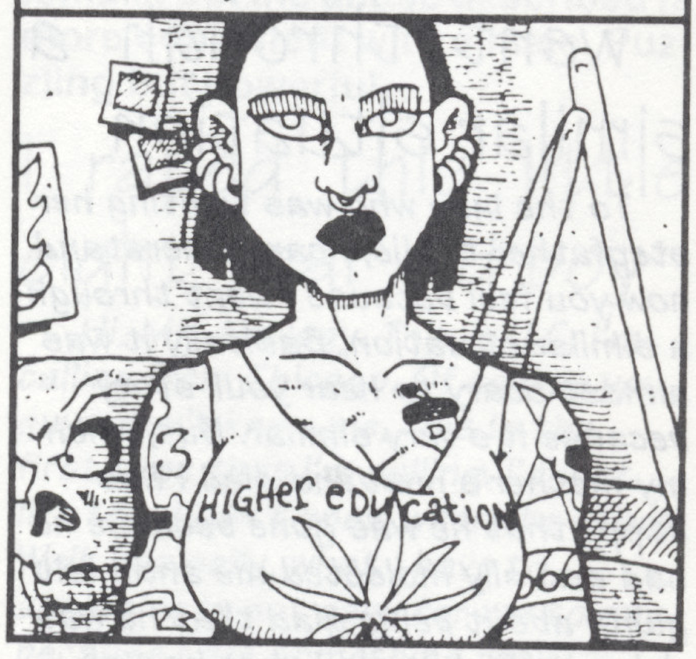
Caning *doesn't* work, because otherwise they wouldn't have to cane anyone. They've downplayed the fact that there were more than just this one kid. There were other kids. Now if caning is such a deterrent, there would be no one committing these crimes. There are people that commit murder in states where there is capital punishment. What kind of deterrent is that? You know, you've got to think.

MEET MY FAMILY

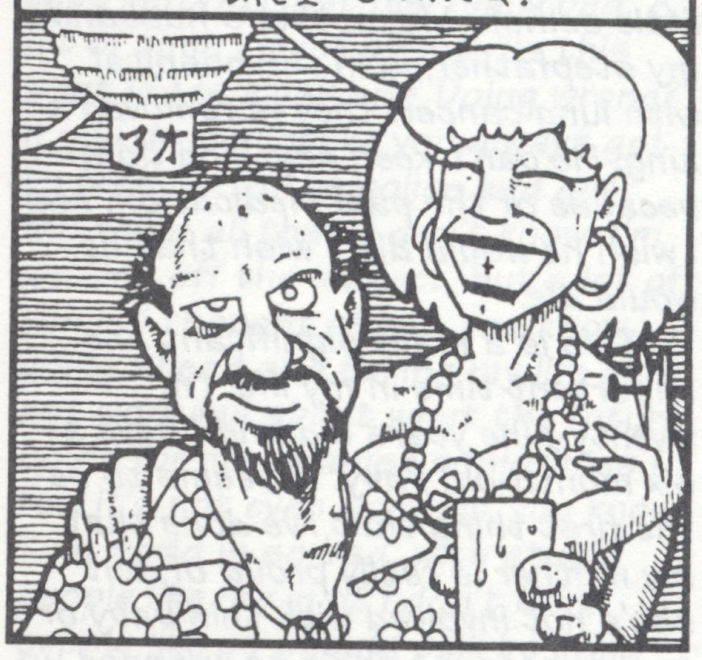
by D.B.VelVeeda

A lot of People ask me, "why Do You call Yourself vel-veeda?"

this is my Sister Dee Dee Vel-veeda. She's been in art School for about a million Years and has, like, five DeGrees...



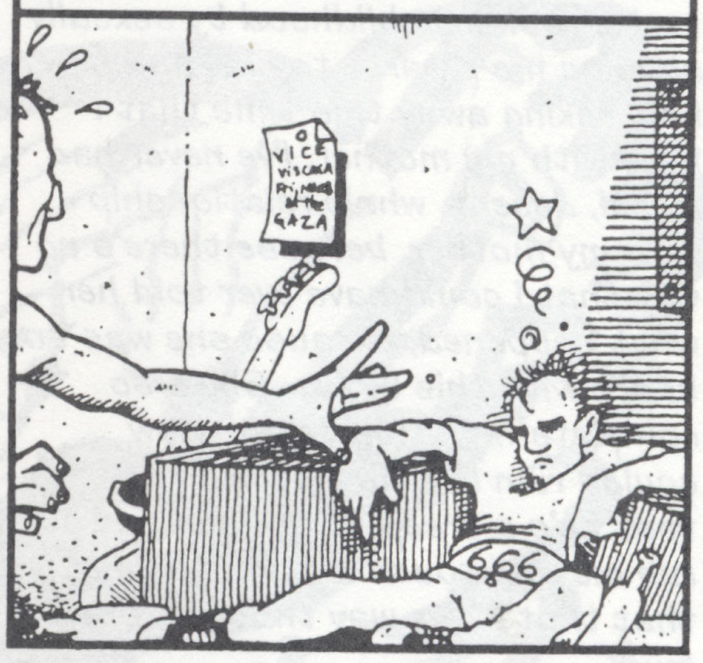
These are my folks, Fi Fi and Chi Chi. They travel a lot and I think they Swing.



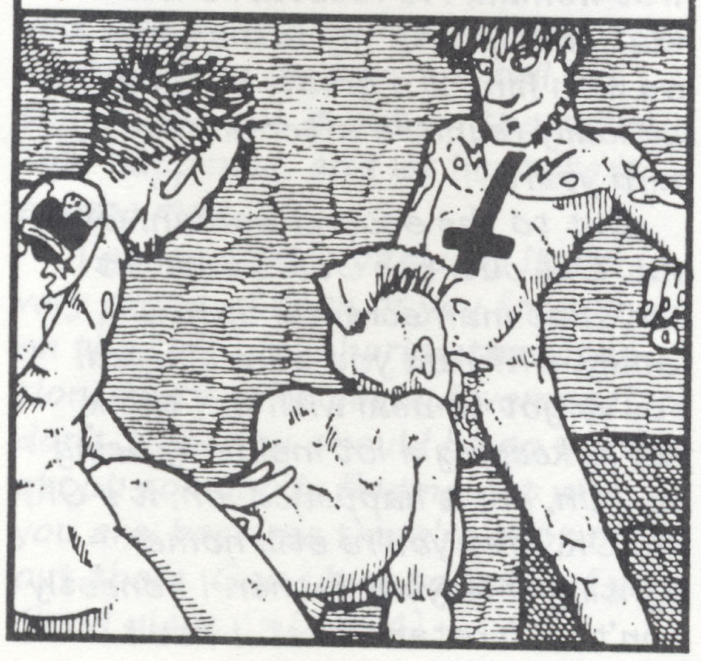
This is my twin brother, SPOODGie mc Geniusboy velveeda. One DAY he told his Girlfriend that he DiDn't feel So GOOD...

and Just DieD RiGht there.

when I heard about it, I fainted... We used to Do a lot of Stuff toGether.



Like fuckinG the same GiRLS...



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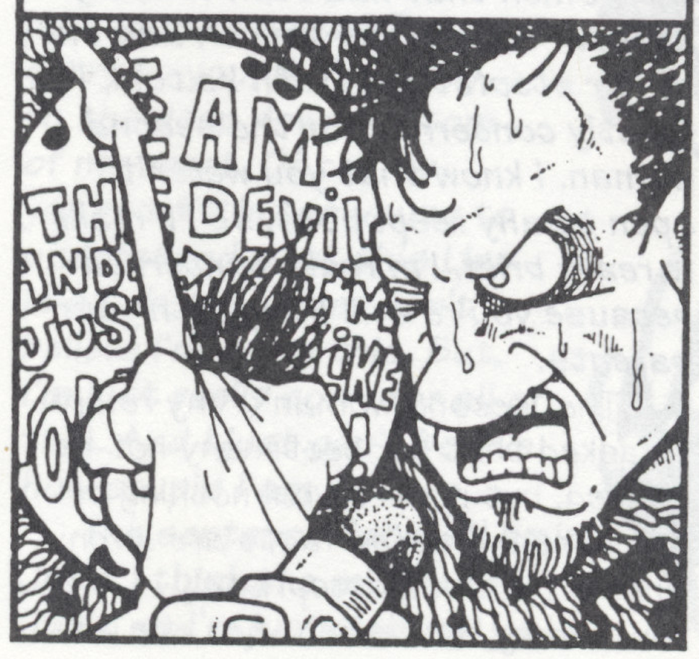

I threw Some Pot SeeDS in with my handful of DiRt at the funeral, but I Guess they GRew Down instead of uP.

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Women and Men on Childhood

First, women: I want somebody to die.

I'm calling to apologize for being a little selfish. My mother's husband, my stepfather, is in the hospital with lung cancer. They've removed a lung. He can't keep anything down because of the pain medication, and I wish he would die. I wish that he would die.

This is a really significant and important time in my life. I'm twenty-nine years old and I have a six month-old baby. It seems to be the first thing that I've done that my mother is really proud of, but she's not involved with this baby or my life because she's so wrapped up with her husband. And granted, she's going to lose him, but it will be the best thing that ever happened to her. I don't give a shit.

He took my childhood by sexually abusing me [starts to cry] *and now he's taking away this time that I have with my mother. I've never had a real, decent, whole relationship with my mother, because there's no way that I could have ever told her what happened, because she was so happy with this beast. She's so complete with this beast. How could I ruin her life by telling her that he's a creep, that he used to rub me and touch me and tell me that that's the way that you show love?*

Consequently, up until now, every relationship I've had with a man has been screwed up. Didn't have a relationship with my real father. But now I'm getting my life together. I have a wonderful husband. I haven't talked to or seen my real dad for years and years and years, and now we're re-establishing a relationship. And I have this beautiful baby [sobs] *that I want to share with my mother. It'd her first grandchild, and He's robbing me, again.* [sobs] *I just wish he would die! I know it will hurt my mother, but she'll get over it. She's a strong woman. So that's my apology, that I want somebody to die.* [4/30/94]

I went through a similar situation

To the lady who was wanting her stepfather to die, I can understand how you feel because I went through a similar situation. Basically it was almost scary to hear your story because it's very similar. But, when my mother's husband died I was happy that he was gone because he had sexually molested me and I felt guilty about being glad that he was dying and I was glad that he was gone when he died. But I don't feel guilty any more because I knew that that was a normal reaction. And as far your mother goes, you have a beautiful baby and a new husband and I think it's about time that you start that with her, don't wait for her to come to you, you go to her because I'm sure right now she may need you regardless of what your stepfather did to you, your mother needs you now and as far as whether or not you want to tell her, that's something you need to come to terms with yourself, and it may be something good that you need to discuss with doctor and your husband. [5/1/94]

Amy from New York

Hi. This is Amy from New York. I just heard the two messages from the women that had been sexually abused—one by her father, and one by her stepfather. Truth be told, I'm mostly concerned for the second woman. I know that you weren't open to any responses, so I'll make it really brief. I'm really concerned because you're still living with your parents.

[The "second woman" Amy refers to asked that her testimony not be printed, but it will reveal nothing of her identity if a few facts are given: She had been inappropriately touched by her father when she was quite young. At the time it happened, she had been sleeping for several nights with her father in her parents' bed when her mother was out of town. She confronted her father about it several years ago, and he denies it ever happened. She says she still loves him, although she is angry at him and picks fights. She still lives at home.]

Um, I was abused by my stepfather. He abused myself, my mother, my brother, and my sister for many years. Basically the most important years of my adolescence. And it really screwed up my sexuality, and my way of relating to men, and it really did bad things to a lot of people in my family. I feel the same way the first woman does. I don't know where he is now. My mother ended up divorcing him, but I hold grudges against nobody except him. I wish death upon him. He was very ill by the time my mom divorced him. He was suffering Crohn's disease and some sort of post-traumatic stress disorder from Vietnam. But wherever he is, I wish death upon him for everything he did to my family. He deprived me of my real family for eight years, and like the first woman, I've reestablished relationship with my father, and I live with him. It's great. My family is basically reunited after a lot of hard years.

But to the second woman: Get out. Get out. For God's sake let her. That man screwed up your family, OK? And you were abused. You've got to deal with it. I think you're keeping a lot inside by being so, "Oh, oh, it happened, oh, it's OK, it's OK." Yet you're still home fighting with your father. I honestly don't understand that. I don't

sexual abuse

understand how you can do that. I really hope you take a look at the family situation you're in now, because—trust me—it is potentially damaging. I ended up leaving home at sixteen. I didn't want to. I ended up under the care of the state. But anything was better than living in that house. I think you should really leave, and your mother should divorce him. And to the first woman, all I can say is I'm very happy for you for finding a great man, because a lot of us who have been abused.... You know, we're never going to come to the point where we're going to be able to have a wonderful relationship with a man, you know, culminating in the birth of a wonderful child. So, I'm very happy for you. I think what you should do is just concentrate on that family. I think you should wait and let your mother come to you. Eventually you should tell her.... That's kind of a sticky situation. This man is in the hospital and he needs someone to take care of him, and your mother needs to be in the caretaker role to put the closure on this part of her life—her marriage to this man. I think you should let her come to you, and once she finally does, whether he's died or not, tell her then. Just put it out on the table: This happened, and let her take it as she may.

I guess that's basically it. I'm very proud of both of you for coming on the Line and sharing the situation. And to the second woman, I don't think you should be so worried about somebody finding out who you are, because there're a lot of us out there. Good luck to both of you. Good night. [5/27/94]

The voice of the next caller sounds female, but the abuse described is more consistent with a male. Puzzling but powerful.

I raped this little eight year old boy

Hi, Mr. Apology. This is J.C. I'm calling from Chicago. Of course you guys don't know me, this is the first time that I'm calling. I'd just like to... I don't know where to start. Well, basically, what I have to apologize is not easy for me to say because I did something really, really, really wrong. I had already gone to the police, I now am waiting for a trial. I have gone to the family members involved and basically everything has been taken care of. But I just want to apologize [crying] by saying that I had raped this... little eight year old boy. We did have intercourse. He did scream and yell. And what hurts me is this is a good friend of the family and he felt comfortable enough to talk to me and anything he needed to say, and yet I can't believe I betrayed his friendship and betrayed our love as friends by going ahead and raping him. I just wanted to say I'm sorry to you, B, I'm sorry to the deep down bottom of my heart. Of course you're a little too young to understand what this Line is all about—I just can't believe I'm doing this. But, I'm just really sorry for all of this. And I just can't believe how stupid I am.

The sentence date will be in June. I think the middle of June, so I'm just waiting, you know, to hear what comes up next and you know, I'm just waiting and whatever the judge says, or whatever the court says, then by all means I've got to abide by it because I did something stupid and I have to basically pay the price for it. And it was my fault and it was not his fault and I just can't believe that I could ever do something like that before. I just feel really bad. A lot of time I think about, "Is this what life is all about? Doing wrong?" If you do a mistake you always got to fess up to the police and get tried and all that. I don't know, I'm getting off the subject, but a lot of times I thought about, you know, going ahead and taking my life and not worrying about what the future holds for me because sometimes I feel it's not even worth it, you know. This world is so bad, with stupid people like me in it. I don't think people like us should still be living because it's just.... We're the ones who are killing the people, we're the ones who are hurting the people. It's us that makes this world so

Drawing by Kelli Crosby

bad, and I want to apologize, and I speak for every last of us who has done something bad in their life, but basically more so for B, I'm sorry and I don't know what to do. I tried committing suicide twice. I have tried going to counseling, but nothing ever happens, nothing came of it. The longest I've ever been to counseling was about for two weeks. I've always quit. I don't know what I should do. But, basically this whole issue is, is that I did something wrong and now whatever becomes of this, then so be it. [sobs] I'm just really sorry. Bye. [5/7/94]

Young man forced to frame his abuser

Hi, uh, this is my first time calling the Apology Line. I've listened for a little while, like maybe a month or so, and I guess I could identify with what CM and Rick were saying in respect to having to sort of cut yourself off from people to feel safe But let me tell you my amazing and unique story.

When I was thirteen I was abused physically by a man, and like a while after it happened it sort of came out into the open. And what he did was he would like spank me and things like that. But he didn't, you know, do anything sexual. At the time, it sounds really stupid, but I didn't realize what was happening, and neither did my mom, and she was there and she knew what was going on and she didn't do a thing, and that made me pretty upset at the time, but now I'm pretty much over it.

But the thing is, when I was with the police, they were trying to get a statement out of me against this person. I mean they were very harsh and very, I don't know, very hard on me. They said things like, "If you say that he did such and such, we could really nail him." And they kept—you know how cops can be—they just repeat the same things over and over. I was kind of naive and I still am. I went along with what they said and I told them that he had anal sex with me in the bathroom when he didn't. And the court went to case [sic] and he.... This is one of those things where it's like a very bad thing in our society to do. So he admitted it, even though he knew it didn't happen. Let me also add that he was.... this was not the first time that he had done this.

He was a complete stranger to me. We met in a restaurant, on my thirteenth birthday. [laughs] And he sort of won over my mom. She's like a single mother and like had some problems controlling me and whatever, so this was a way to have a man around. So, that's what happened, the case went to court with my testimony and he's been in jail for a while, and I don't know. Sometimes I get thoughts of him sitting in a jail cell, you know, plotting his revenge against me or something. I don't know. Some people might say, that he deserve whatever, he deserves. I'm just talking I guess, just trying to feel my way around this system here, my first time. I thought I might as well start up with an apology, so I apologize to the guy, I know he's not going to hear it and it's not going to make it any better, but there's it is. [5/5/94]

CM's "5000 Day War"

Hello, this is CM. I guess there's not a tremendous amount to say about the original issue of "when I tell her" [i.e., when CM tells his girlfriend that he molested his young niece] Eventually it will become necessary. I hope. I guess. What I really want to talk about is something I've been working on in the past month, something I call the "5,000 Day War"—which lasted about 13 years and 8 months or so.

When my mother left home I was about 12 or 11. Somewhere in there I declared war on the rest of the world. Before she left I was pretty much a trusting individual. Suddenly the world was no longer something that could be trusted. I think I can say that I honestly haven't trusted anyone since then, and I don't know if I ever will again. The history of the 5,000 Day War is basically that I decided—I actually decided—I thought about it—not to trust.

The result is that I have shallow and almost meaningless relationships, even with my girlfriend. My best friend, who was my best friend before and after the incident that lead me to call this line—Why in the hell am I being evasive about it? Before and after I molested my niece—he knows about it and everything, and even him I don't trust completely. I just don't open up. There are things about me that nobody knows. There are things about me that I won't talk about on this line, and none of you all are ever going to meet me.

Basically my mottos have been "don't trust," "don't need," and "assume that everyone is going to hurt you." When you don't trust anyone for extended periods of time—I can't say you get used to isolation, but you get to the point where it no longer seems unusual. I'm not nearly as isolated now, but in the past I was unusually isolated. There were other reasons for it. For one thing, I wet the bed clear into my teen years. There were months in my life when I literally did not say a word to anyone, despite going to high school most every day.

In my inner nature I am not a person that would be isolated. I am not naturally inclined to spend long periods of time alone. When this powerful urge to be with other people is set off by intense fear of doing just that, it makes things real interesting. I remember once, in high school, I saw a couple walking and she had her hand in his back pocket. A wave of intense fury swept over me. I think I skipped school that day. I didn't want to deal with it. I think the reason for that rage was because I saw clearly and unquestionably that two people can be together and trust each other and love each other and be close and intimate. I had convinced myself that this did not happen. It challenged my worldview and made me angry because he had something that I couldn't have. But, as it turns out, I can.

Anyway, I realized that no one else was fighting this war and no one was looking to hurt me. I think the reason I came to this conclusion was because I have become a little more secure. I'm not going to shrivel up and die the first time someone rejects me or leaves me or

whatever. I certainly wouldn't enjoy it, but... I've been able to experiment a little bit with trusting people. One interesting thing I've recently discovered is that not only are other people not planning or having tendencies to hurt me, but they're scared, too. Other people have insecurities too, and other people are wondering whether I'm going to be trustworthy and whether I'm going to hurt them. I haven't done a tremendous amount about it yet, but I feel better having called off the war.

I have also realized that my relationship with my girlfriend is not nearly as deep as I had thought because my standards were pretty low. Coming from where I was, anybody whom I had more than a two-minute conversation with was a lifelong friend. So, having dated someone more than twice, that person was obviously going to be my wife. To go further in the relationship, I'm going to have to play with the idea of actually trusting her. I would normally be scared at that, but I'm not. I'm kind of looking forward to it. I feel like I can trust her, not only because she's trustworthy, but because even if it turns out that she's not, or even if it turns out that she wants to leave, I'm not going to shoot myself the next day—and I'm also not going to go back into a hole and declare war on the world all over again. I feel like I can risk it.

Now, as far as children are concerned, it's not that I don't want children, it's just not a good idea. I don't want to be in the situation where children are living in the house with me, 24 hours, every day—purely for me. I'm not going to do it again. It does not take a tremendous amount of effort for me to not do it. I just wouldn't be able to live and feel right or normal. [3/7/94]

Rick to CM on Trust: I was a victim too.

Hello, this is for CM. I was a victim of child abuse (like everybody I guess, nowadays). Therefore, my first reaction is to say, "You're evil, you're bad," whatever. But I've gone on to do crisis counseling and have come to terms with what happened to me. I'm certainly no expert, given my particular circumstances, but I have a couple of questions for CM: You mentioned a need for power. Is it possible that your need for power is going to now be transferred onto your new girlfriend? Is it going to affect your relationship with her? Can you see yourself acting towards her the way you acted towards your niece?

You also mentioned that you were opposed to the idea of having kids. I wonder how serious you are about that. I don't know if it's right for me to judge, but to me it sounds like a good idea. Were I in that situation, trying to do whatever I could to protect myself, I hope I would have that much courage. I wonder if you've considered making it so that you're not able to have children, having a vasectomy or whatever. So, those are the two things that I wanted to bring out. Neither one of those are really "advice," but they're things that I think are important for you maybe to think about. [2/23/94]

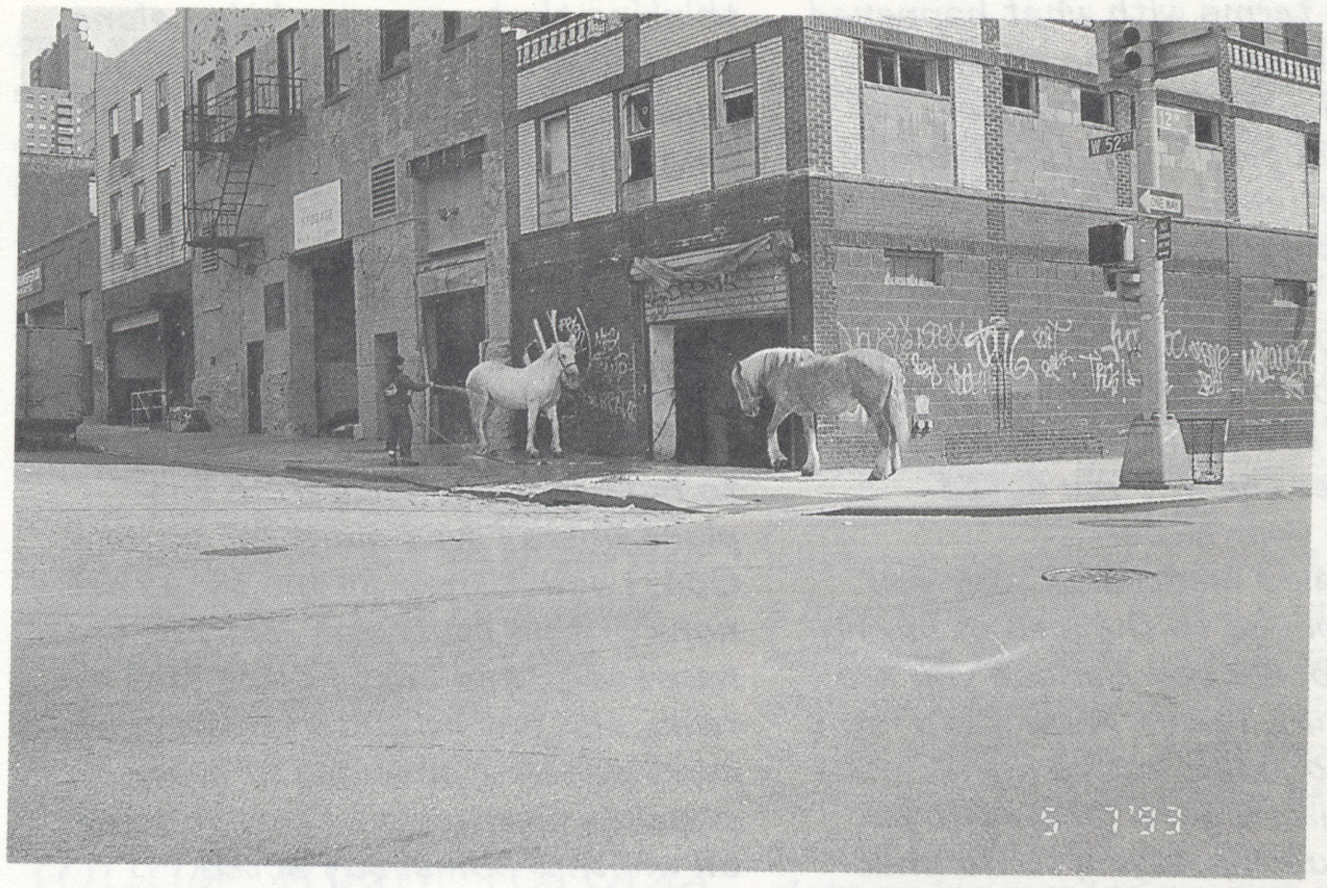
CM to Rick

This is CM. Um, well, I took notes on this, so I'll start at the beginning. Rick, I guess we could say we know each other, couldn't we? I'm gonna try real hard not to sound arrogant about this, but: Eventually you'll get over it. I used to pride myself on having a good grasp on not fooling myself, or logic, reality, that kind of stuff. But, it turns out I'm just as capable as anyone of fooling myself, and so are you, and so is everybody. The fact is, you're pissed at somebody, and you don't want to deal with it, but you're going to have to deal with it if you deal with people. I don't mean to sound like a complete jerk about it, but it's just that I went through it, and it took me so damn long, it irritates me to think that somebody else could take five thousand days to get through it their own damn selves. To get to the point where you realize, as I did, that you're not gonna be isolated your whole life, you're not gonna spend the rest of your life alone. That can be another excuse: thinking that you can't be with anybody, or thinking that you enjoy being alone. You know, there are certain advantages to being alone, but not the long run sort of advantages.

Well, you've got time, so you don't have to force anything, but I would just like to predict that eventually you're going to realize that isolation ain't exactly all it's cracked up to be. But it is strange to hear another voice from the place where I lived alone for so long. God, I didn't know at the time that none of this stuff was really all that necessary, and that I could just relax, and not be quite so aware of every possible outcome of every possible interaction, keeping score on whether somebody acted trustworthy or not. It's just that you could get old doing that real quick. I know I did. Um, but, it's not necessarily negative to isolate yourself for a long time, it's just that knowing the nature of it might help to get it over with faster. It's like something awful happens, and you back off. It's like, you're in a car wreck, and the first thing you do is get out of the car in case it blows up. You back off, you get away from the situation, and then maybe you can deal with it. When an awful thing happens to you, your perception is that the awful thing is the whole world, and you have to back off from the whole world.

I mentioned that there was only one casualty, and it was me. Margo said that the other casualties were other people whom I didn't touch or interact with. That's, I suppose, true, but what I was saying was that it just seemed so silly to me, that I was fighting a war with the whole world, and the world didn't actually notice. It's just so intensely pointless, all you could do was laugh, 'cause it was just such an egotistical thing. Like the world really gives a crap if I interact with it or not.

I suppose it's a good idea to be aware of someone's potential reaction, but I think I'm gonna jump in, at least occasionally, into some situations; because I've found that you can stick your toe in, or you can jump in, you're gonna get cold either way. Just go, just do something, just get it over with. Don't be so damn anal-retentive about every fucking thing. [4/18/94]



Urban Landscape

Bruce Williams

These photographs, and those on covers of this Apology Magazine and the previous one, were taken by Bruce Williams, a.k.a. Barking Dog Photo. Williams isn't one of those guys dangling an SLR with an eight inch telephoto. His style is inexpensive out-of-date film, point-and-shoot cameras, unobtrusive penetration of police lines, and a quick-draw on the subject. The mention of costly high quality materials and equipment elicits a dismissive snarl from the "dog."

"Barking Dog" was his CB handle before he started using it as a business name. He lives alone in a cluttered two room apartment in Long Island City, Queens. Resigned to the sacrifices of his calling, he has relinquished his bed to service as a work surface, and he sleeps on a couch next to his CB and scanner radios. Unlike his near-namesake, Bruce Wayne, our obsessed urban hero doesn't have the scratch for high-tech toys or a night on the town. The sound-track in the background is the squawk of an unending CB conference among Williams' "spot news" photography buddies. At any given moment, one of these street wizards might swoop down on a disaster, another to a demonstration, and a third to some other potentially newsworthy event—in search of that rent-paying shot.

The uncluttered cityscape at top left was taken a year ago at the normally bustling corner of 57th Street and 12th Avenue, but the empty intersection and the carriage horses evoke an earlier age.

The second one was caught at the scene of a major Brooklyn waterfront fire in 1987. The two perpetrators had been hunting rats with a revolver when the Fire Companies arrived. Resenting the interruption of their amusement, they brandished the gun, and the firemen called in the police. Williams shot this one with a five alarm fire at his back and a line of fire to his front.

The third urban landscape focuses on a street prostitute working the Sunday shift at a typical New York light-industrial zone. It was taken around 1989. Judging from the absence of the usual hotpants and halter ensemble, there's little reason to doubt Williams' appraisal of her as a crackhead out to earn the next rock.

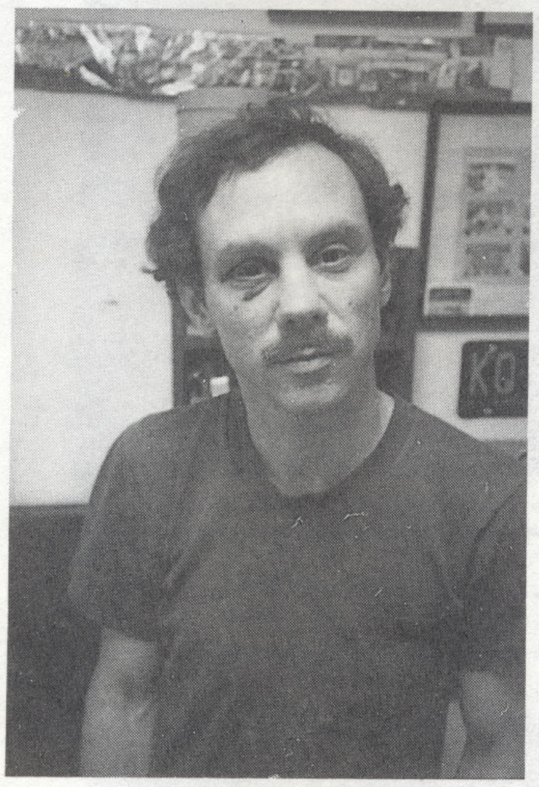
Urban Figure

The graceful melange of limbs, breasts and torsos at top right was taken last June at the Coney Island Mermaid Parade. The courts in New York City have recently granted to women a right men have enjoyed, that of baring their chests in public, but it was recommended women carry rocks, coconuts, or heavy chunks of coral if they so do.

The second figure demonstrates that Williams' ability to capture an unusual arrangement of limbs is not limited to female subjects. He shot this in 1986 beneath the Henry Hudson Bridge at the northern tip of Manhattan. He and several cohorts were video taping at some distance the collection of body parts found by police in two garbage bags. The video equipment Williams and friends were using turned out to be defective, so this in-close shot taken while the police were recovering the second bag is his only record.

Williams says the odor of decay was so strong it permeated his clothing–much to the dismay of those sharing the car ride home. The hands of he victim were not found, but Williams says the police used dental records to verify that the victim was a known drug courier who came up short and suffered a torturous death.

The young woman depicted at lower right shared Bruce Williams' apartment for a few months. She was brought to New York from Las Vegas by a man who wanted to pimp her. In an attempt to free her and give her new start, a friend of Williams put her up with his family. Later she roomed with Williams in his small apartment. It did not work out for a variety of reasons. The photo is part of a series taken at a friend's studio. She agreed to be photographed wearing the blond wig in a series of "girlie" poses. ✍



Bruce Williams sporting black eye
by Mr. Apology

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DAVID, Musician, seeks Female, Emotionally intense, Spiritually Inclined, Physically energetic, Disruptive, Unruly, Self-secure, Affectionate, Good self-esteem.. *0008*

STUDY PARTICIPANTS: True, in-depth responses re: Fear/excitement effect on male loss of bladder control will get in return...? Specifics: setting, pre/post thoughts, etc. All requests acknowledged. *0009*

ATTRACTIVE DIVORCED FEMALE, 35, wants generous cash gifts, for nothing. Because I deserve it and you've been very naughty. Include SASE for reply *0010*

GWM, Hi, my name is Joe. I'm looking for friendship and a possible relationship in the future, but I emphasize *future.* I'm 5'11", dk brn hair, brn eyes, 175#, Italian, 26 yrs. Crazy sense of humor, looking for same. *0005*

Lonely Prisoners

WANTED: A PEN PAL FOR A LONLEY GUY
Seeking a female or male to write to....
If you are into movies, model building, and music plus naturalism, please send a letter. I'll write back. Charles Page. #42370, Ste. 1B-F171, POB 1059, Santa Fe, NM 87504-1059

WANTED: SPARE BOOKS AND/OR PEN PAL
First timer in 'til '95. Reading is my refuge in this crazy house. James Demick #785220, Columbia Cor. Inst.n., Rt. 7, Box 376 (CA31) Lake City, FL 32055-8767.

I read a lot of stuff on different subjects. I have an MA in sociology. Write, send reading material. Harold Blank 89A 4592. Eastern Cor, Facility, Naponoch, NY 12458-0338.

I would appreciate receiving any kind of donation: Books, Mags, Letters, Photos, Poetry, Love stories, Sex, Anything is OK. Gerald Gaines #91A8325, Elmira Cor. Fac., POB 500, Elmira, NY 14902

FRANKLIN FURNACE

Eugene Rodriguez

Doubting the House of Fiction
Multi-media exhibition exploring the experience of growing up Chicano and gay. Rodriguez constructs a house which evokes his childhood home in Oxnard, CA., as a projection of a young boy's dream life.
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TheNewMuseum of Contemporary Art
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Main Gallery
Through August 14th:

Chen Zhen: *Fields of Waste*
Huang Young Ping: *Chinese Hand Laundry*
The first collaboration of two internationally acclaimed Chinese expatriate artists divides the Main Gallery into opposite and overlapping territories. Each has his own area with a central space shared by both. Huang and Chen explore the irony of New York as ethnic melting pot vs. its distinction as a center of world power and wealth.

Through August 7th:

New Work Gallery

Cindy Tower: *Westward Expansion Inwards*

Cindy Tower combines wall sized photomurals with a multitude of Tree Paintings, Forest Groupings, and painted Wood Pile Sculptures, to transform the New Work Gallery into a dense forest.

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Atsushi Nishijima: *Mondrian Ping-Pong*
Visitors are invited to pick up a paddle and play. Instead of playing for points, opponents become collaborators in an improvised sound performance. As the ball hits different areas of the table, an amplified spectrum of sounds resonates through the surrounding space.

WorkSpace Gallery

Susan Unterberg
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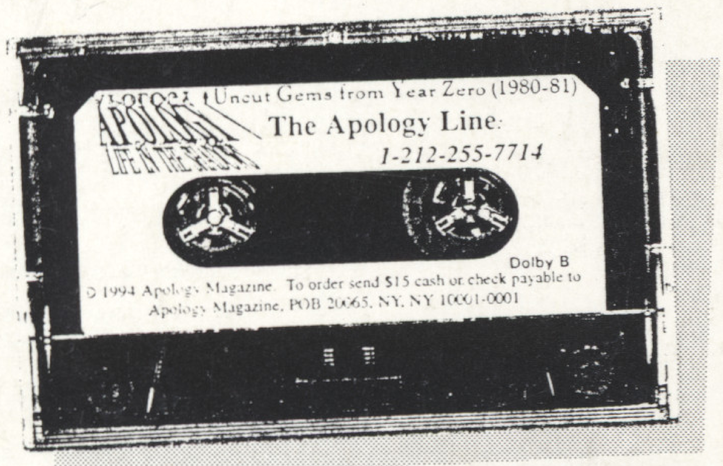
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